

# Christian Courier

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"The Christmas Advent takes on biblical meaning only when believers see the manger scene simultaneously flicker apocalyptically into the tableau of the grown Christ..."

Calvin G. Seerveld

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## In This Issue

A daughter is always 'Home for Christmas'..... p. 2

A 'sideways' Christmas in Japan..... p. 3

Editorial: The healing Word become flesh..... p. 4

Letters..... p. 5

Truth stranger than fiction: 'And Miles to Go Before I Sleep'..... p. 7

Jesus is 'The Excalibur of Israel'..... p. 9

'Room enough for all' .. p. 9

Oosterhuis: a cross-cultural Christmas ..... p. 10

Recommended family videos and children's books ..... p. 11

Don't put away 'Away in a Manger'..... p. 12

Lasting gifts: Gold, Frankincense, Myrrh..... p. 14

Advent: An exercise in walking..... p. 15

Story: 'More joy in heaven'..... p. 16

Meditation: Are you an astrologer or shepherd? ..... p. 17

'The Word Gift': A Christmas liturgy..... p. 18

Learning forgiveness: 'Abernathy's Christmas' ..... p. 20

Contemplating human birth in a barn: 'A father and son Christmas' ..... p. 22

Kids' story: Sam the lamb is special..... p. 27

Church news ..... p. 29

Wolters: The barnyard language of Christmas..... p. 30

## Home for Christmas

### **My Dear Daughter,**

Even though you will be far away,  
you will be home for Christmas.  
Let me tell you why and how.

When you were little  
you tore the paper off your gifts.  
I fussed and scrambled and cleaned up the mess.  
Now I tear it too;  
I still clean up the mess, but later will do.  
The wisdom that there are more important things  
than a clean room is a precious keepsake  
of Christmas.  
Remember the China doll you yearned for so much?  
At the time it was a costly, frivolous gift.  
I still smile as I remember  
the delight on your face when you opened the box.  
Now she stands quietly and beautifully in your room,  
once only elegant and impractical,  
Now a priceless memento of that special Christmas.  
Whenever I see a child on Santa's knee  
I remember how you were always too realistic to believe.  
We have no pictures of you with Santa.  
I think you knew even when you were very young  
the true meaning of Christmas.  
When I hear the songs of Christmas,  
Your voice is loud and clear.  
How exquisitely you sing them!  
My most cherished treasures include a scrapbook in  
my memory;  
snapshots and bits of the simple joys of special  
moments,  
like watching you try to catch snowflakes on your  
tongue  
while walking to church on picture-perfect  
Christmas Eves.  
And, lest you think I'm getting old and sentimental,  
I also remember bitter tears,  
the frustrations and anguish of growing up.  
But those images are fading with the passage of time,  
replaced with the radiance of your smile  
and the resonance of your laugh.  
You are a strong, beautiful woman now;  
I'm so proud to be your mom!  
Do you know that I'm a little jealous of you?  
You have such gentleness of spirit, such courage, such  
grace —  
and still so young;  
so far to go, so much to do.  
But let's get back to Christmas.  
The joy, exuberance and laughter that you share with  
those around you —  
that is Christmas.  
The willingness to give so freely, so unselfishly of  
yourself —  
that is Christmas.  
You know that Christmas is the gift of love



given by the Christ Child born that first Christmas Day.

You grasp that love and live it openly and honestly.  
And you are loved so much, my daughter, my sister,  
my friend.

Remember sometimes when you were upset  
and you tried to wipe away kisses,  
and I told you that a kiss of love goes straight to the  
heart,

is tucked away there for always  
and can't ever be wiped away?

Christmas is like that, too.  
And when we can't be together on that one day,  
all the wonderful truth and delightful moments of  
Christmas  
will wrap themselves around us and hold us together.  
Yes, miles may separate us, and we will miss the touch  
of each other,

but we can never be apart when we cherish and  
carry and live  
the love and joy of Christmas.

You will always be home for Christmas, my dear, dear  
child.

**With much love and, yes, a few tears,  
Mom**

Willy Nywening  
Strathroy, Ont.

## Front page illustration

The artist who produced our Christmas front cover this year is Michael Richison, an art major at Calvin College, Grand Rapids, Mich. He wants to concentrate on painting but is also interested in graphic design. He plans to spend the next semester studying art history in Rome. His home address is: Michael Richison, 11753 S 800 W — 35, Marion, IN 46952. (phone: (765) 664-6013).



# Driving sideways for Christmas

Sonia Jones

The concept of driving sideways is not one that springs easily to mind unless you happen to be in Japan. My husband and I were navigating a rented Nissan down a narrow country road on the island of Kyushu. It was Christmas Eve, and we were on our way to visit Yutaka Kawashima, a young friend who taught English at an institute in Fukuoka. We were to meet him

with a cow that was crossing the road (sporting an intriguing *kanji* tattoo on her side which indicated to everyone, except us, the name of her owner) we managed to arrive in Fukuoka without harming any of the local flora or fauna. We even arrived safely at the *ryokan*, where we were met by a cheerfully beaming Kawashima and his more subdued colleague, Suzuki.

"You have roll of film," noted Kawashima as we were check-

Gordon and I looked at each other with raised eyebrows and meekly followed him down the hall. We stopped in front of a door bearing a sign with writing that was completely unintelligible to us.

"What does it say?" asked Gordon.

"Sign say, *Foreigners in bathroom. Stay out.*"

When we opened the door we found ourselves in a large, beautifully tiled room with a steaming hot pool in the middle

said Kawashima after we had finished our last bite of *tempura* (fried shrimp in light batter). "It is Christmas Eve, so we order special dessert. We celebrate with you."

Just then the waitress kneeled down and placed before us some dishes with amorphous orange blobs in the middle of them, beautifully decorated with fresh strawberries, mint leaves (we assumed) and tiny paper umbrellas.

"How nice!" I exclaimed, with all the originality of a *kanji*-tattooed cow.

It began to dawn on me that I was eating mashed sweet potatoes and strawberries with a pair of chopsticks in a *ryokan* in the city of Fukuoka, on the island of Kyushu, in southern Japan, on Christmas Eve. It felt unreal.

After dinner Kawashima and Suzuki gazed at us thoughtfully. They wanted to know why we considered ourselves to be so sinful that Jesus Christ had to die for us. Surely we are not so evil that it should have been necessary for God to use such extreme measures.

We explained all the basics of our Christian faith, but we could see that our friends were unconvinced.

"Maybe it would help if we looked at the origin of the verb *to sin*," I said, falling back on my knowledge of linguistics. "It really means *to miss the mark*. Think of it this way. If you had a bow and arrow and you were trying to hit a bull's-eye, you would at least want to be facing the target, wouldn't you?"

"Of course!" said Suzuki.

"So when we realize that

chine-gun rapidly. Suddenly they turned to us again.

"We have another question," said Kawashima, almost apologetically. "How to be good when born evil?"

"It's an impossible task," said Gordon. "That's why Jesus died for us."

"Then Christians not have to



Sonia Jones today.

try at all. Do what they like!" exclaimed Suzuki eagerly.

"No, Christians try harder," I smiled.

"But why try, when all is forgiven?" Kawashima wanted to know.

"We do it for love. We do it because we're grateful."

"Then life very difficult. Straight and narrow road hard to follow," Suzuki observed. "Easier to drive on main highway. No potholes."

"So then, how do you do it?" asked Kawashima.

"We follow the road signs. And God helps us," I explained.

"Road signs?"

"Like this one," said Gordon, picking up the photo of the detour sign and handing it to Kawashima. "We often get routed onto the road less travelled."

The two young men put their heads together and studied the picture, conferring once again in top-speed Japanese.

"We have made decision," said Suzuki, turning to us finally.

"We will follow road signs for a day, see what happens," Kawashima cut in, smiling from ear to ear. "Tomorrow Christmas Day. We would like to honor Son of your God."

"We will drive sideways," said Suzuki, with a deep bow.

*Sonia Jones is a freelance writer who holds a PhD degree in Romance languages from Harvard University. She attends All Nations Christian Reformed Church in Halifax, N.S., where she lives.*



Kampai! (Cheers) Gordon Jones (left), Kawashima and Suzuki toast one another at the "ryokan" in Fukuoka.

that evening at a *ryokan* (Japanese guest house) in the centre of the city.

Gordon was clutching the steering wheel with both fists, peering intently into the middle distance and praying he wouldn't cause any accidents along the way. How was it possible that we had arrived in Japan without knowing they drove on the left?

Suddenly a sign loomed up ahead of us. DETOUR! DRIVE SIDEWAYS. It took a few seconds for us to realize that we were being instructed to take a sharp turn to the left. As Gordon carefully maneuvered the car in that direction I opened the passenger window and snapped a picture of the detour sign so that we could enjoy it at some future moment when we were feeling slightly more relaxed.

The rest of the trip into the city turned out to be uneventful. Apart from a close encounter

ing into the hotel. "I take it to Kodak one-hour photo shop for quick development, yes?"

"Oh, I don't want to put you to any trouble...."

"No trouble. Shop right here on corner. I come back soon."

Suzuki insisted on taking the film to the shop himself so Kawashima could come with us to inspect our room. It was a clean, comfortable accommodation complete with paper screens and *tatami* mats. We were proud of ourselves for knowing enough about Japanese culture to remove our shoes before trampling on the mats.

"It is six o'clock," Kawashima announced happily. "Time for bathroom."

Gordon and I stared at him, feeling somewhat perplexed.

"Is six o'clock the traditional time for a visit to the bathroom?" I inquired.

"No," said Kawashima, smiling broadly. "Come with me."

and faucets all around the walls, with bars of green soap nestled in small wooden buckets.

"Enjoy your privacy," smiled Kawashima, bowing slightly as he closed the door behind him. He was also proud of himself for knowing enough about North American culture to realize that many foreigners have a bit of a problem with public nudity.

That night we enjoyed a delicious meal served in our room by a shy young woman dressed in traditional garb. The four of us were wearing kimonos that the hotel provided to all its honored guests. Gordon and I were feeling very pleased with ourselves for managing to wield our chopsticks with such consummate skill that we didn't drop even one morsel of *sushi* (raw fish) on the photos that Suzuki had been kind enough to rescue from the Kodak lab while we were changing for dinner.

"We have surprise for you,"

**"Straight and narrow road hard to follow," Suzuki observed.**

**"Easier to drive on main highway. No potholes."**

we're sinners, that we're missing the mark, the appropriate reaction is to turn around and face the other way.

"Ah, so," said Kawashima, with a typically Japanese intonation.

"So *desu ka*," agreed Suzuki, looking very serious.

The two young men conferred with each other for a while, speaking Japanese with ma-



## Editorials

# Word become flesh heals flesh become evil

The real depth of Christmas celebration lies in our awareness of sin and the joy at our liberation from evil. You have to know yourself a sinner before Christmas makes sense. Don't travel to Bethlehem in a royal coach of self-importance. Don't come to the manger either with a microscope, a measuring tape or a reporter's notebook. Come instead on foot and with a trembling heart. For here you will find a mysterious remedy against evil, a balm in Gilead to heal the sin-sick soul.

## An object for research

M. Scott Peck, who wrote the book *People of the Lie*, thinks that evil should be called a mental illness. Many people of our time would agree. Some say, if you remove poverty you remove evil. Others believe that counselling can cure the soul. Right-wing and left-wing politicians see each other as the source of evil. And for ages education has been declared the path to the light. All of this results in some form of social or psychological engineering. So much for coming to Bethlehem like shepherds or wise men.

Peck adds, "If evil is an illness, it should then become an object for research like any other mental illness, be it schizophrenia or neurasthenia." In other words, Peck is looking for a cure for the powers of darkness.

We don't think Peck is entirely wrong in calling evil a disease. The prophet Malachi spoke of Christ as "the sun of righteousness ... with healing in its wings." Jesus himself healed people who were possessed by the devil, and he did say that he came to heal the sick, not the healthy, meaning, those who know themselves to be sinners. So, indeed, evil is a disease.

## A therapeutic birth?

But we do not share Peck's view that evil is a mental disease, though evil can affect the mind powerfully. We are more inclined to call evil a spiritual disease that affects body, mind and soul. And as spiritual disease, it needs a spiritual cure.

That's where Bethlehem comes in.

If evil were a mental disease, we would not need to celebrate Christmas. Unless the contemplation of a vulnerable child in a manger is somehow therapeutic to the mind, the coming of Christ into this world has no meaning for someone who wants to research evil as a mental disorder. If coming to Bethlehem were to improve mental health, every psychiatric hospital in the country would have manger scenes in its wards, and researchers might want to study the effects of straw on the emotions.

As it is, Christmas confronts us with a mystery. Science has to take a back seat here, even the discipline called theology. The mystery of a child in a manger who came in response to the Fall thousands of years ago confronts us with something that cannot be placed in a test tube or a book of theology. To all these scholars we say, "Sages, leave your contemplations, brighter visions beam afar."

What are those visions? They are the hopes and fears of all the years being met for us in Bethlehem.

Jesus' coming has a lot to do with fighting the disease called evil. But the fight is going to take place on a spiritual plane. The weapons used by Jesus are his submission to the Father, his reliance on God's Word and his willingness to bear God's anger against sin. His strongest weapon is his love. How can anyone research that and come up with therapeutic formulas?

## He crushed his opponent's head

From the moment of his birth, Jesus experienced opposition from sinful people, beginning with Herod. In later life the religious leaders of his time opposed him all the way to the cross. But behind the scenes it was Satan himself who was directing the battle, and at strategic moments emerged himself as the great opponent. It was a fight of light against darkness.

The battle was foretold by God in the Garden of Eden: "And I will put enmity between you [Satan] and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel" (Gen. 3:15).

So here we are at the crib-side of our little warrior — "This little babe so few days old/ Has come to rifle Satan's fold...." This mystery calls forth faith, not analysis. It evokes joy, not skepticism. It demands adoration, not the gathering of empirical data.

Let's greet the hour of redeeming grace with pure elation. **BW**

## Christian Courier

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- ◆ provide contact for the Christian community.

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## I'm dreaming of a universal Christmas

If evil can be pictured as a dark, cold night, then Christmas is the first break of warming sunlight sneaking over the horizon. Perhaps it's appropriate that we in the northern hemisphere celebrate Christmas at a time when winter sets in and the days are shortened. It's a benefit that people near the equator and in the southern hemisphere have to do without.

Only we northerners can with justification sing the Huron carol: "'Twas in the moon of winter-time, when all the birds had fled, that God the Lord of all the earth sent angel choirs instead." Notice how the angels replace the birds, who had fled south, along with all the sun worshipers from countries with cold climates. How can a person appreciate that Jesus came to sweep away the cold and darkness of evil while he or she is sitting on the beach or enduring the heat of summer? Christmas in the sun? Impossible!

Of course, someone may retort that it's pretty difficult to sing "Lo, how a Rose e'er blooming from tender stem hath sprung!" while scraping the ice off your car windshield. Only in the south can you sing that with conviction! Oh yeah? Please, sing on: "It came, a blossom bright, amid the cold of winter, when half spent was the night." Even the Rose needs the contrast of winter white and cold to

stand out as a blossom bright.

Rightly or wrongly, we people in Alberta, Minnesota, Ontario and Maine associate Christmas with snow, sleighs, a fire burning in the hearth, food being baked and cooked in kitchens and cozy family gatherings in warm houses.

On the other hand, we also sing "Shepherds in the fields abiding, watching o'er your flocks by night." Not exactly a winter scene. Snow-covered fields are not ideal for grazing. And how could these shepherds run to the stable if the roads had been slippery? And doesn't Bethlehem have almost the same climate as Arizona?

We must reluctantly come to the conclusion then that Christmas is not really a northern feast. We in the north have added so many cultural trappings and psychological expectations that we forget we are dealing with the Lord of the universe, whose birth is independent of snow and cold. The cold darkness of evil is a global phenomenon. Jesus is the Morning Star who shines equally bright in either hemisphere.

The angels sang about peace on earth, not just peace in Canada, Siberia or Sweden. God and sinners all over the globe are reconciled! So wherever you light your candle and sing your carol, a blessed Christmas to you all! **BW**



## Letters

# Don't give recognition to homosexuality

I read your open letter entitled "How would you do public justice to gays?" provoked by Gerald Vandezande (CC, Nov. 17). Here are my responses, and CHP's.

CHP opposes legislation giving public recognition to homosexual behavior as normal and acceptable. We assert that homosexuality is wrong, because it is immoral, unnatural and unhealthy. No other group in society is singled out on the basis of [its] sexual behavior.

There is no evidence that homosexuality has a genetic or hormonal cause. It is more properly regarded as a harmful addiction, like alcoholism.

Furthermore, it is wrong to treat homosexuals as though they were all alike. Some desperately want to escape their addiction to unnatural lust, and should be helped. Some want to be left alone, and as far as government is concerned, they should be left alone. But a militant minority has been vigorously pushing pro-gay propaganda in public schools and in the media, and their lies must be exposed and resisted.

Recognition of homosexuality or giving the practices moral equivalency with heterosexual marriage would send dangerously false information to young

Canadians — misinformation that could amount to a premature death sentence: research (by the Family Research Council of Washington, D.C.) has shown that the average life span of homosexual males is 39 years — nearly three decades shorter than the average for all men.

The politization of homosexuality by gay activists has already resulted in thousands of unnecessary deaths from AIDS and other diseases and the spread of virulent new forms of diseases once thought controlled. The fact that homosexuality is unhealthy is demonstrated by extremely high rates of STDs [sexually transmitted diseases] and parasitic bowel infestations among homosexuals.

## Justice for all

So how would we do public justice to gays? Simply by not identifying them in any way different from other Canadians: they are, thus, already entitled to all the appropriate public justice provisions in the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

But public justice must be for all, so those to whom homosexual behavior is a moral issue must not be compelled against their conscience to accord this addictive behavior moral equivalency with

normal marriage; thus landlords must not be compelled to give lodging to homosexual couples if doing so violates their conscience; Christian schools and churches must not be compelled to place homosexuals in positions that are regarded by the congregation as role models.

Here are my specific answers to CPJ's specific questions:

1. What can Christians as citizens be proposing to our governments so that they will practise public justice for all?

To meddle as little as possible in the lives, and especially the values instruction, of its citizens; to restrict itself to the legitimate spheres of government: to punish evil-doers and reward those who do good; to maintain civil order and peace, so that the church and the family can do their proper jobs in educating the next generation of citizens, passing on to them the culture that has nourished civilization, and nurturing individuals who give glory to God.

2. How can our governments best ensure the full protection of the fundamental freedoms and equality rights guaranteed in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms?

Under no circumstances should groups be accorded special rights on the basis of how they choose to behave: that can only be accomplished at the expense of the rights of those who choose to behave otherwise. For example, to give homosexual couples or unmarried couples the full rights of married heterosexual couples changes the meaning of "marriage," to the detriment of the normal family.

3. What can churches urge our governments to be and do to promote public justice without imposing the

church's confessional stance on others?

The real problem here is not any attempt by the church to impose its stance on others, but the concerted, well-funded attempt, aided and abetted by governments, public education and the media, to impose the homosexual agenda on all of society — including the church.

The bedrock question is one of truth. And we must not accede to the relativism of the humanist minority by adopting their creed that truth can be whatever individuals choose to believe: truth is truth, whether they choose to believe it or not. Revelation is an instrument for appropriating truth, at least equal in value to reason. Both reason and revelation indicate that homosexuality is learned, not innate; and is unhealthy and unnatural, and therefore should not be taught to young people.

Ron Gray, National leader,  
Christian Heritage Party  
Hull, Quebec

## Cuts will help kids

It was disturbing to read about Christians supporting the illegal strike (CC, Nov. 7).

Only if the issue involves disobeying God's laws are we justified in breaking the laws of our country.

Harris' cuts are necessary and will eventually benefit the kids, not hurt them.

How can it help them if we leave them a huge debt?

Rena Glass  
Kleinburg, Ont.

## October issue hit the spot



Every so often an issue of CC really hits all the right nails on the head. The Oct. 17 issue was such for me, beginning with the cover stories on economics. This is certainly an aspect of societal life that has been ignored by Christians.

We have not listened to the few who have given us an alternate lifestyle from "saved by growth" and where interest rates are raised when a person who has been unemployed finally gets a job because the economy is "heating up." Is there a contradiction here or am I missing something?

Harry der Nederlanden's letter about

Calvinistic discipline was thoroughly enjoyable — even though I can't remember ever having felt the sting of a "matteklapper" on my own glutens maximus.

Even the letter from CPJ shows a certain humility in asking us for advice on the question of justice and responsibility for/of gays and lesbians in our society. We struggle to know God's will together.

"Media non-events: numbing North America" was one of those articles with information that is essential for us to live conscious, Christian lives. Just think: What's on TV is important, what's not isn't, our society says. For this reason alone I will keep CC coming.

"Miracles take a little longer" was a gem. In the middle of all that heavy reading we could shed a tear.

Bert Witvoet's editorial on "Promise Keepers" was the most balanced and insightful account of this movement I have read anywhere.

The comment "If it is true that men are generally shewed in their development, women must be too. If life is like a dance one partner's wrong steps affects the steps of the other" is a concept I have explored and dealt with myself in a number of works of art. For my daughter and my son, the dance is central in pictures I made for their wedding days. A picture is worth a thousands words; I pray they're listening.

Allow me to include one of these as an illustration.

George Langbroek,  
St. Catharines, Ont.

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# Christmas greetings from the CC staff



*Stan de Jong*

*Marian Van Til*  
Dancer the Cat



*Grace Bowman*



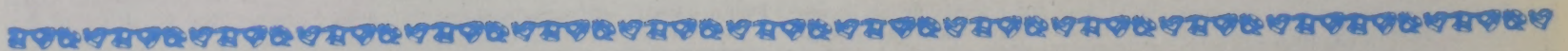
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*God rest you merry, readers of Christian Courier, let nothing you dismay,  
for Jesus Christ our Savior was born on Christmas Day!*

CC Staff (from left): Stan de Jong, Marian Van Til (with Dancer the Cat), Grace Bowman, Ingrid Torn, Alan Doerksen, Bert Witvoet.



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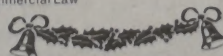
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## Season's Greetings

Friends, families, volunteers  
staff and doctors, ministers, deacons,  
elders, and investors, directors, officials,  
testators and bequestors.

*May the peace of Christmas be in  
your heart this season and  
throughout the New Year.*

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Christmas  
and a  
prosperous  
New Year*

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## And miles to go before she sleeps

Eleven years ago *Christian Courier* ran the following story in its Christmas issue. Two years ago, Anne Van Arragon Hutten asked us to reprint this story. She wrote: "It's the best thing you've ever printed in your Christmas issues." We agreed and here it is, new to some, familiar to others, but enjoyable and moving just the same.

**J.A. MacDougall**

Finally, one day that December, I had to tell her. Medically, we were beaten. The decision lay with God. She took it quietly, lying there, wasting away, only 23, and the mother of a year-old child. Eleanor Munro (the name has been changed) was a devout and courageous woman. She had red hair and had probably been rather pretty, but it was hard to tell anymore, she was that near to death from tuberculosis. She knew it now, she accepted it and she asked just one thing.

"If I'm still alive on Christmas Eve," she said slowly, "I would like your promise that I can go home for Christmas."

It disturbed me. I knew she shouldn't go. The lower lobe of

She had been assessed at the leading chest hospital in the province and been turned down for pneumothorax, because of pleural adhesions; thoracoplasty, because of the location of the cavity; and pneumonectomy.

Eleanor Munro had weighed 125 pounds. She was down to 87 the first time I saw her. Her fever was high, fluctuating between 101 and 103 degrees. She was, and looked, very toxic. But she could still smile. I'll always remember. If you did her the slightest kindness she'd smile.

Maybe that encouraged me. I don't know. But I did know then that I had to try to help her.

I first called Dr. I. Rabinovitch in Montreal, because he was a top expert on the use of the then-new drug streptomycin. Dr. Rabinovitch told me the drug wasn't available. When I described the case, he said he would advise against its use anyway. I then phoned a doctor in New York who was experimenting with a procedure called pneumoperitoneum.

This consists of injecting needles into the peritoneal cavity to force in air and push the diaphragm up against the lung. If we could get pressure against that lower lobe, we could hope to force the TB cavity shut. If we could do that, nature would



circumstances. She nodded, and then exacted from me that promise.

Amazingly, she was still alive on Christmas Eve, but just barely. The cavity was still growing, her condition still worsening. She was so far gone that, as I recall, she had already had the last rites of the church. But she held me to my promise and, with renewed doubts, I kept it. I told her not to hold her child and to wear a surgical mask if she was talking to anyone but her husband. His own case had given him immunity.

She promised, and off she went by ambulance, wearing that smile I can't forget.

She came back to St. Martha's late Christmas Day, and she kept ebbing. No one could have watched her struggle without being deeply moved. Every day her condition grew just a bit worse, yet every day she clung to life. It went on, to our continued amazement, for weeks.

Toward the end of February she was down to or below 80 pounds. She couldn't eat — and new complications developed. She became nauseous, began to retch and vomit even without food in her stomach. I was stumped. I called in a senior medical consultant, and when he examined her he was stumped too. But with a grin, almost facetiously, he asked me if I thought she could be pregnant. I can still remember exactly

how I felt: the suggestion was utterly ridiculous. Everything I knew about medicine added up to one conclusion: she was so ill, so weak that she couldn't possibly have conceived. Her body just wasn't up to it.

Nevertheless, I did take a pregnancy test — and to my astonishment it was positive. On the very outer frontier of life itself, she now bore a second life within her. It was about as close to the impossible as you're ever likely to get, but it was true.

When I told her, she smiled and sort of blushed.

Legally, medically, we could have taken that child through abortion because it imperilled a life that was already in jeopardy.

At that time, TB was the number one medical reason for doing so. But we didn't do it. The patient and her husband were against it and so were St. Martha's doctors, not only on religious grounds, as Roman Catholics, but because we were certain the operation would kill her. Besides, she was so far gone we were sure her body would reject the child anyway.

So we fed her intravenously, and watched her fight to sustain two lives in a body in which only some remarkable strength of character or divine intervention had allowed her to sustain even one.

The struggle went on for weeks, and never once did we alter our conviction that she was

dying. But she simply refused to die. And she kept her child.

And then an incredible thing happened. By late March 1948, I was confounded to find her temperature beginning to go down. For the first time we noted some improvement in her condition, and the improvement continued. She began to eat, and to gain weight. A chest X-ray showed that the growth of the TB cavity had stopped. Not long after, another X-ray showed that the diaphragm was pushing up against the lower lobe of her diseased lung to make room for the child she bore. Nature was doing exactly what we'd failed to do with pneumoperitoneum: it was pressing the sides of that deadly hole together. The child was saving the mother!

The child did save her. By the time it was born, a normal, healthy baby, the TB cavity was closed. The mother was markedly better, so much better that we let her go home for good within a few months. Her smile had never been brighter.

I still remember with delight the Christmas cards she sent me for years. They were just ordinary cards, with the usual printed greetings and her name. But to me they were like monuments to a miracle of Christmas.

*Dr. J.A. MacDougall was an anesthetist at the Saint John Regional Hospital in Saint John, N.B., when this story was written.*

Amazingly, she was still alive on Christmas Eve, but just barely. She was so far gone that, as I recall, she had already had the last rites of the church.

her right lung had a growing tubercular cavity in it, roughly one inch in diameter. She had what we doctors call open TB, and could spread the germs by coughing. But I made the promise and, frankly, I did so because I was sure she'd be dead before Christmas Eve. In the circumstances, it seemed little enough to do. And if I hadn't made it, I wouldn't be telling this story 37 years later.

Eleanor's husband had the disease when he returned to Nova Scotia from overseas service in the Second World War. It was a mild case and he didn't know he had it. Before it was detected and checked, they married. She caught the disease and had little immunity against it. It came on so fast and lodged in such a difficult place that it confounded every doctor who tried to help her.

have a chance to close and heal the cavity by letting the sides grow together.

At the hospital, we considered the risks and decided we had to face them. The operation took place the day after my phone call. We pumped air into the peritoneal cavity, but it nearly killed her. It was obvious that the amount of air she could tolerate could in no way help. Every doctor in the room agreed we shouldn't try a second time. We were licked.

It was then that I told her medical science had gone as far as it could go. I explained why in detail and she appreciated it. She listened with a quiet dignity and an amazing resignation. I told her that her Creator now had the final verdict and that it would not necessarily be what either of us wanted, but would be the best for her in the



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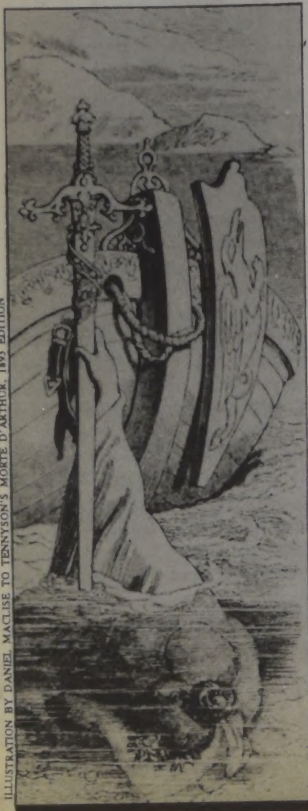
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# The Excalibur of Israel



**Bob Hostetler**

The whiskered knight eyed the Christmas Day crowd outside the stone church.

A massive stone occupied the ground beside the knight, bearing an anvil in its midst. Stuck into the anvil by its point, a sword gleamed, bearing these words in gold: "Whoso pulleth out this sword out of this stone and anvil, the same is rightwise born king of England."

The knight grasped the sword in one hand and, looking confidently at the crowd, heaved mightily. The sword remained. He grabbed it with both hands and yanked again. Still nothing. He struggled sweatingly until others pushed him out of the way and took his place.

Then came Arthur, thought to be the son of a simple knight. The boy, with an air of unconcern, put hand to hilt and, without effort or trouble, pulled the sword Excalibur from its place.

Three times that simple but forceful demonstration was repeated, until the people recognized Arthur as the rightful king of England.

Similarly, one might say that the nation of Israel had an "Excalibur." Isaiah set the sword in stone with his prophecy. "The Lord himself will give you a sign," he said. "The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel" (Is. 7:14).

Only Jesus was equal to this Excalibur, for he alone revealed the full meaning of Immanuel, "God with us."

## God with us

None of the towering figures of Israel's history — not Abraham, not Moses, not Joshua nor David nor Elijah could lay claim to that title. None of them could be called Immanuel.

Don't miss the significance of that title. Some seek to ignore its impact. Some strive to deny its importance. Some struggle to cloud its clear implication, but the promise is clear: "They will call him Immanuel 'God with us'" (Matt.1:23).

Jesus testified, "Before Abraham was, I AM" (John 8:58). No wonder that those who heard Jesus' admission of John 8:58 took up stones to kill him, for

they recognized his words as a claim to divinity. The inestimable glory of the Incarnation is capsulized in that one word, Immanuel, "God with us!"

## God with us

It is true of our time, as it was in the days of Joseph and Mary, that people the world over are prepared to accept the doctrine of a God who is *above* us. His reality can hardly be denied. It is evident in the vast, starry host of heaven, and our gigantic leaps in knowledge have only opened our eyes wider in amazement at his Genesis power.

Many people likewise admit the existence of a God who is *against* us, a God who must be appeased, whose law must be kept if his wrath is to be averted.

But the prophet's promise announces God *with* us, a God who is one of us. It proclaims a God who "made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness" (Phil.2:7, NIV).

In the person of Jesus, "Immanuel," God rubbed shoulders with us. He is a God *with* us, *among* us, *in* us, reconciled to

us, at peace with us, interested in us, interceding for us. Immanuel. God *with* us.

## God with us

To us it is nothing to imagine that God was with Abraham, that he was with Moses, that he knew Elijah and David and Isaiah.

But the promise of Immanuel's coming is "God with us!"

The Incarnation, crucifixion, resurrection and ascension of our Lord Jesus Christ made it possible for him to be present with us today. He not only trod the dusty roads of Galilee with James and John, but he can accompany us on the asphalt highways of our daily lives. He came to earth not only to lift a frightened Peter out of threatening waves, but to raise us out of our sins and transform us from victims to victors!

The promise of Immanuel, God *with* us, can be yours. Just breathe a simple prayer of faith. He will come to you. He will abide with you. He is the rightful King of your heart.

*Bob Hostetler lives in Hamilton, Ohio.*

# Room enough for all

**Ed Vandenberg**

Growing up in Thunder Bay, Ont., I once asked my parents, "Will there be a house for me when I grow up?"

My childhood question reflects a widespread human quest for room, space, a place to belong. Many young people today are wondering: "Will I find a place to live? Will there be a job for me when I finish school? Will I be able to raise a family?"

People of all races, cultures and languages are asking these questions in this aggressive and highly competitive world. We think we have problems! Consider the 400,000 refugees who are crammed in a small camp in Zaire. Many have not eaten in days after fleeing violence and persecution in their homeland.

God knows our search for room. The good news of Christmas is that God was born among us (in a stable, because there was "no room in the inn") so that he could make room for all!

Yes, there is more than enough room in God's Kingdom for everyone. However, to enter we must begin by making room for God's Word in our life. We

need to receive Jesus Christ and follow him. Yet to all who receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God" (John 1:12-13).

One of the biggest temptations in North America is to let the cares of this world, "the deceitfulness of wealth, and the desires for other things," crowd out the Word of Life planted in us. God's judgment falls on those who forcibly make room for themselves.

But God has a place for those who humbly put their trust in him, who hunger and thirst for righteousness, who share their bread with the hungry, and who seek justice.

Make room for God in your life and God will make room for you. In answer to my childhood question, Jesus has replied: "Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in me. In my Father's house are many rooms, if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you."

*Reprinted from the Lighthouse News, Winter 1996.*



Christ Over New York City (paint on slatted steel door), Ukrainian-American, 20th century.



## Education

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## A cross-cultural Christmas

On November 11, a few hours after Canadians had commemorated the sacrifice of those who had given their lives for the preservation of freedom and justice in the Western world, the Christmas advertising campaigns rolled into action.

In Edmonton, where there had been much controversy surrounding the presence of a cross on the city's cenotaph memorial, the entrance of Christmas to the tunes of "Jingle Bells" and a "White Christmas" seemed a fitting depiction of a secular society that was once Christian.

Freedom and justice in our contemporary, multicultural society have come to mean that no offense ought to be given to any person who reveres values or symbols of beliefs that are different from what was once the "mainstream." As I drive past the sites of accidents in Edmonton, marked as a reminder to the public by a coffin symbol (because a cross was offensive to some), I decided that multiculturalism is a concept of cultural and religious impoverishment. In desiring to be offensive to none, we sacrifice our historical rootedness, our religious stories and icons, and our most valued beliefs on the altar of superficial freedom and tolerance for vocal interest groups.

### Doomed by 'tolerance'

How did I come to this point? I muse about what symbol for Christmas we could devise that would be multiculturally acceptable in our public school classrooms. Other than Santa Claus (who is no longer an icon of religious generosity but has become a symbol of unbridled greed and materialism) I can think only of the Christmas tree or lights as symbols of the hope that is the central message of Christ's birth.

But if we put up trees and lights as multiculturally acceptable symbols, we impoverish the central message. Christ's birth gives hope for redemption, but it is redemption that is bought through the suffering of the cross. Is there "a hope through suffering" icon that would be multiculturally acceptable? Is the belief in a redemption through suffering universal enough to have a multicultural stamp of approval? Or are we doomed by the "tolerant" forces that hold sway today, to celebrate December 25 as simply a "Feast of Light" as the pagans did?

Lest anyone think that I am proposing a prejudicial, racist, ethnic solution of intolerance and persecution towards minorities, I suggest that we change our multicultural, uncritical and uneducated attitudes to become those of a cross-cultural, mutually exchanging, culturally enriching respect for each other's beliefs.

### True cross-culturalism

When I was a high school student in Westdale public, the Christmas season featured

### Pedagogies



Alyce Oosterhuis

carol singing in all my language classes: "Aedeste Fideles" in Latin class; "Stille Nacht" in German class; "Cantique de Noel" in French class. One year, after having sung the required carols in our French and Latin classes, two of the more vocal Jewish boys in the class, begged to be excused from participating in German class. Their wishes were respected and they went home early. That was in the '50s when multicultural tolerance had not yet been placed into Canadian educational consciousness.

How could the school have reacted in a cross-culturally upbuilding manner? Maybe if we had made room for these Jewish students to express what the concept of Messiah entailed in the Hebrew faith we could have had a cross-cultural enrichment of our suffering hope. They could have taught us some redemptive Hebrew



"I can think only of the Christmas tree or lights as symbols of the hope that is the central message of Christ's birth."

songs and, as a consequence, our Christmas celebration would have had an Old Testament Hebraic grounding that is not necessarily expressed in a "Stille Nacht."

Christian and independent schools across the nation continue to celebrate Christmas with the symbols, language and doctrines that are a vital part of our culture. But these schools represent a minority of all Canadian children being educated. Unless we can find ways and means to redeem Christmas culturally and religiously in our society, the message of Christ's redemption and suffering will become so wrapped in tinsel and glitter that it will lose all relevance and personal/cultural meaning.

Alyce Horzelenberg Oosterhuis will be visiting Kenya in December and is curious to see how (and if) Christmas is celebrated in the absence of polar Santas and snow-shovelling elves.



## Reviews

## Family Videos

## Bogus

by Marian Van Til

*Stars Whoopi Goldberg, Gerard Depardieu, Haley Joel Osment. Screenplay by Alvin Sargent. Directed by Norman Jewison.*

Albert is a happy six-year-old until his show-business-mother in Las Vegas is killed in a car accident. Albert is sent to live in New Jersey with his mom's foster sister, Harriet (Whoopi Goldberg), whom he doesn't know.

On the way, Albert conjures up a friend, Bogus (Gerard Depardieu). This story is a touching example of how one lonely but brave boy uses such an imaginary friend — as many children do — to cope with his isolation and sadness.

Through Albert's imagination, Bogus provides a steady, comforting force in his life when, at first, his aunt is a hard-edged and reluctant parent, and when he knows no one else in the world. It is also through Bogus (and of course, Albert) that Harriet is finally able to become vulnerable enough to adopt the kind of childlike imagination Albert has that will free her from her own toughened, street-wise adult cocoon.

*Bogus* lets kids know that there's nothing silly or weird about having imaginary playmates or using imagination. Christian kids aren't exempt. They may feel Jesus' presence in scary or lonely times, but he also gave them, just like all kids, the wonderful gift of imagination, for good times and bad.

In two instances there is profanity used by Harriet, which (though it fits her character initially) was not necessary to the film. That may be something to be discussed briefly with kids. But the film is still poignant. The film makers obviously remembered very well what it was like to be a child.

*A fun and instructive film for young kids and their parents.*

## The Secret of Roan Inish

*Stars Mick Lally, Eileen Colgan, John Lynch. Based on Rosalie K. Fry's story "The Secret of the Ron Mor Skerry." Written and directed by John Sayles.*

This film sends the imagination soaring. Roan Inish is a beautiful, isolated Irish island. In 1946, six-year-old Fiona Coneely loses her mother — the last one buried there before the few remaining fishing families leave for the mainland.

Now that the war is over, most people want to look ahead, put aside the old legends, adopt electricity and indoor plumbing and embrace a more prosperous life. But Fiona's father can't be in the factory and caring for her, so she goes back to the seaside, a short row from Roan Inish, to live with her grandparents.

Towheaded Fiona had a baby brother, Jimmy, with hair as dark as a seal's hide, and eyes to match. One day while in his Moses-like cradle, Jimmy got whisked away to sea, too fast for his frantic grandfather and father to catch him.

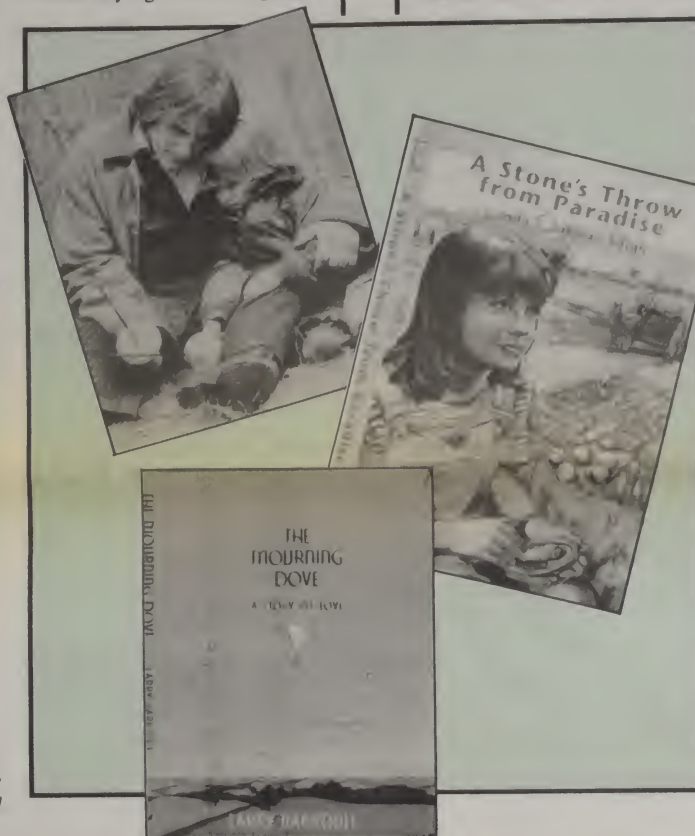
Fiona has a grown-up cousin who is dark like Jimmy was; he tells strange stories about their ancestors, and about Jimmy. People say he's daft.

Slowly Fiona pieces together an amazing legend about the origins of her dark-haired family members and their relation to Roan Inish. Legends may very well be based on the truth, might they not? She's determined to find out.

In the end, Fiona and her grandparents believe the legend, and are rewarded in an amazing way as a result. The legend also draws a direct connection between us and creation's natural environment.

This wonderful, whimsical story will leave you smiling long after you rewind your VCR. It's directed by American John Sayles who has made several effective films about North American teen culture.

*An exceptional family video; beautiful cinematography. The story moves slowly at first, as life did in the time and culture it encompasses. Give yourself time to get into it and you'll be glad you did.*



## Children's Books

## A Stone's Throw from Paradise

By Linda Oatman High

*Grand Rapids, Mich.: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1997. 143 pp. Hardcover: ISBN 0-8028-5142-9. \$15 (US). Paperback: \$5 (US).*

Lizzie Zook is a 13-year-old who lives in West Virginia but whose family roots are among the Amish in Pearly Gates, Pennsylvania — a stone's throw from Paradise, Pa. Her parents were both Amish but left that Old Order world behind.

Lizzie's mother died when she was but nine months old. Her father, Jake, remarried a few years ago to a woman named Mae (who wants Lizzie to call her Mac-mama). Lizzie now also has a baby brother, Lucas, whom she describes as "a wiggling sack of flour" — who smells a lot worse.

Though she dearly loves her dad, she's not keen on him loving a new wife and child. And she isn't keen on loving Lucas and Mac-mama herself. She just can't get her own mother out of her thoughts; she wants to discover as much as possible about this woman she never knew.

The way to do that is to go live for a while among the Amish with Granny Zook (her dad's mother), who needs a helper for the summer. Lizzie discovers some unexpected things about both Granny Zook and her mother's family. She comes away realizing that the Amish, despite their "unworldliness," are no more "perfect" than any other Christians. She also forges important new relationships, and comes to realize where her real home is.

Author Linda Oatman High has a delightful writing style which incorporates unusual, humorous metaphors and descriptions. Having four children of her own, she's tuned in to how young teenagers think and act, and to their emotional needs.

*An excellent story for readers aged 10-14 which may help them sort out their own feelings about their families. The father/daughter relationship is particularly poignant.*

## The Mourning Dove: A Story of Love

By Larry Barkdull

*Cambridge, Ont.: Golden Books Publishing (Canada), 1997. 96 pp., hardcover. ISBN 0-307-44011-7. \$13.95 (Cdn), \$9.95 (US).*

In 1959, a nine-year-old boy named Hannibal comes to live with his widowed grandfather after he loses his parents in an accident. Written from Hannibal's point of view at a later time, this story tells how "Pop," as Hannibal calls his grandpa, made a wonderful home for him and gradually imparted his Christian wisdom to his grandson.

It's an engaging, often funny story which gently teaches young readers (and older ones too) about the extreme sacrifice Love is willing to make. It makes its point in an understated but thoroughly effective manner; the surprising, poignant ending (which sounds overtones from the Prodigal Son parable) may even elicit some tears.

An interesting note about the author: Larry Barkdull was a publisher of books, magazines, music and art for 20 years, but this is *his* first book. Hannibal's story "germinated for 19 years before Larry gave a completed manuscript to his wife, Elizabeth, for Christmas in 1995," says Katherine Roos of Golden Books.

Incidentally, the Barkdulls have 10 children. Maybe that's why Larry is so adept at telling a good story. The book is beautifully published with a sturdy, sewn binding and a fine, thick stock, creamy-colored paper.

*Makes an effective gift for children from about age eight, and for adults as well.*



## Feature

## Don't put away 'Away in a Manger'

# In defense of Christmas-carol theology

Marian Van Til

I have several Christian friends who dislike Christmas carols which speak of Jesus in the manger, or which picture a cozy familial scene with the animals knowingly looking on. The songs are too idyllic, they say; the business of God becoming incarnate was a terribly messy one, just as *our* being human isn't a tidy business.

"The little Lord Jesus, no crying he makes..."; "The ox and ass before him bow..."; "See amid the winter's snow..." How realistic are those images? they ask. It all gives people, especially kids, the wrong idea. It's enough to put a person off Christmas carols, period. And the ubiquitous mall versions only increase one's distaste.

### 'Realism' at what age?

I'd like to argue against that view. I doubt that kids weaned on a Reformed worldview will get the idea from songs like "Away in a Manger" that Jesus *never* cried (he did as an adult, we might point out; why not as a child?), or that sleeping in a manger with Mary and Joseph by his side was like some jolly, contemporary family campout.

But if very young children *do* have such notions, are they harmful? As kids get older they will learn that Jesus lived his first days in a barn/stable (or perhaps a cave) which was likely damp, dark and smelly; that he wet and dirtied his diapers; that he burped up his mother's milk periodically and was fussy when the flu bug bit; that he suffered myriad other frustrations of infancy and childhood which all human children must endure in this fallen world.

Older children will learn that we don't actually know exactly what day or even time of year Christ was born; that he couldn't have had blond hair and blue eyes; and that Palestine's desert climate certainly didn't produce snow and pine/fir-"Christmas" trees on Jesus' birthday.

Kids will gradually incorporate the implications of the biblical "facts" into the fact that the

### No Sad Thought His Soul Affright

1. No sad thought his soul af-fright. Sleep it is that mak-eth night; Let no mur-mur nor rude  
2. Prom-ise fills the sky with light, Stars and an-gels danc-ing in flight; Joy of heav'n shall new un-

wind To his slum-bers prove un-kind: But a quire of an-gels make His dreams of  
bind Charms of e-vil from man-kind, Love and joy their power shall break, And for a

heav'n, and let him wake To as ma-n-y joys as can In this world be-fall a man.  
new-born pain-er's sake; Nev-er since the world be-gan Such a light such dark did span.

This piece started life not as a carol but as a simple choral movement from Ralph Vaughn Williams' oratorio *Hodie* ("This Day [Christ is Born].") The first stanza text is anonymous. Ursula Vaughn Williams wrote the second stanza.

Christian world has chosen December 25 to celebrate Jesus' birth, and does so in as many ways as there are human cultures. It's doubtful that most, if any, of that will come as a shock to today's savvy kids.

### Let kids be kids

But I wonder how "realistic" small children need to be when it comes to Christ's birth. Do we demand such realism from them about anything else in their young lives? Do we expect them to understand the stress of poverty? the repercussions of divorce or death? the uncertainty of unemployment? Should they know how messy giving birth really is, especially in the absence of heated, running water?

All the implications of Christ emptying himself of his God-

glory by being conceived in the womb of a virgin and born as a helpless human baby (many animals are less helpless at birth) is beyond our adult comprehension, much less graspable by children. However, as Christian children grow, the ramifications of Christ's incarnation seep into their souls, guided by their parents', church's and Christian school's biblical wisdom. Along the way, carols serve a purpose.

Why do carols tend to present Jesus as uncrying? I think such images are a symbolic way that poets use to acknowledge reverence for Christ as God-and-man, even as a baby — an acknowledgement of his divine power over creation (and even over his own human self) rather than a studied attempt to sanitize the Nativity. Of course, how Christ's divinity manifested it-

self in his humanity, and if it did so right from birth, has been argued in all the centuries since the event and is still debatable.

Whether whimsical or "accurate" in every detail, carols get children to realize that Baby Jesus was not just any baby; that, yes, he was/is human like them, but that his being God and a human person too makes him totally unique. And that he needed to be that in order to save us.

### Skippping mountains

How do we explain the cosmic reverberations of a God-child coming among us, other than to appeal to things which spark a child's wonder, imagination, and eventually, understanding: the marvel of that divine child sleeping peacefully in the

manger; animals bowing to their Creator in praise; stars singing out along with the angels.

There's good biblical precedent for animals and the rest of creation reacting in overt adoration. Have you ever seen the mountains skip like rams? the wings of the ostrich flap joyfully? or firebrands stream from the mouth of leviathan?

If Scripture describes God's earthly creatures responding in such ways in every-day praise to him, surely to imagine creation reacting in a special way to God breaking into our world as a human being to rescue us is not far-fetched.

Some carols may present such things in fanciful language (as does Scripture), but that's part of using imagination as a good gift of the Lord, one of the wonderful things about being



human. "Putting away childish things" as we mature doesn't mean that only the "facts" are real. As Madeleine L'Engle maintains in her *Genesis Trilogy*, in a sense, anything we can imagine is "real" because it's part of creation.

At the same time, many so-called idyllic carols are pretty realistic in describing why Christ came, and pretty thorough in telling the whole story, in images that capture hearts and imaginations, children's and adults' as well.

Lastly, carols that present Christ's birth amid the cold and snow of winter, or in European-like settings, are doing what people in every culture have always done: adapt stories, and particularly, biblical stories, to their own time, place, people and culture. Why should we accept, for example, the native North American setting of Christ's birth in "The Huron Carol," or assume Africans to

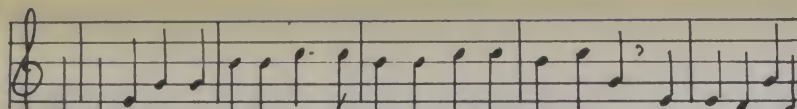
whom we've sent missionaries will envision the story in their own cultural setting, but not allow ourselves (or our ancestors) to do the same?

### Antidote to secular holiday

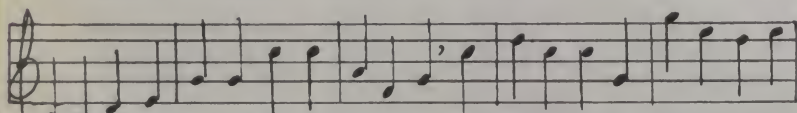
Some people say we obsess over Christ's birth while we down-play his more important death, resurrection, and especially, ascension (but if he hadn't been born, could he have died for us?). If Christmas-fixation is truly a problem for Christians, following the seasons of the liturgical church year (both in church and at home) is a good antidote.

And another good cure is those Christmas carols, singing them till they're implanted in our memories (when memorized in childhood they become part of our life-long worship consciousness). The secular

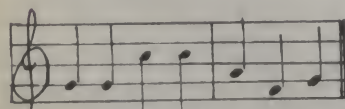
## Jesus Christ the Apple Tree



1. The tree of life my soul hath seen, laden with fruit and al-ways green: The tree of life my
2. His beaut-y doth all things ex-al: By faith I know, but ne'er can tell, His beau-ty doth all
3. For hap-pi-ness I long have sought, And plea-sure dear-ly I have sought: For hap-pi-ness I
4. In wear-y with my fer-rer toil, Here I will sit and rest a-while: In wear-y with my
5. This fruit doth make my soul to thrive, It keeps my dy-ing faith a-live; This fruit doth make my



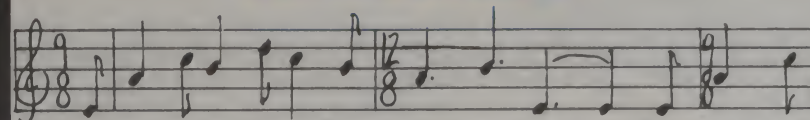
soul hath seen, Laden with fruit and al-ways green: The trees of na-ture fruit-less be Com-  
things ex-al: by faith I know, but ne'er can tell the glo-ry which I now can see In  
long have sought, And plea-sure dear-ly I have sought: I missed of all: but now I see 'Tis  
fer-rer toil, Here I will sit and rest a-while: Un-der the sha-dow I will be, Of  
soul to thrive, It keeps my dy-ing faith a-live; which makes my soul in haste to be With



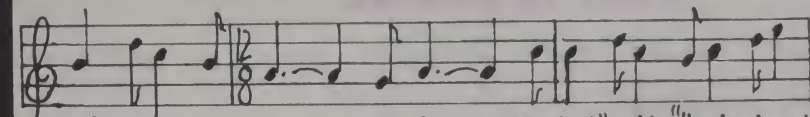
pared with Christ the ap-ple tree.  
Je-sus Christ the ap-ple tree.  
found in Christ the ap-ple tree.  
Je-sus Christ the ap-ple tree.  
Je-sus Christ the ap-ple tree.

This haunting, modern but folk-like tune was written by Elizabeth Poston, who died in 1987. The text, from a 1784 New England collection called *Divine Hymns or Spiritual Songs*, uses an allusion from Song of Songs 2:3 ("like an apple tree among the trees of the forest is my lover among the young men") which from medieval times was, in an allegorical reading, seen to refer to Christ.

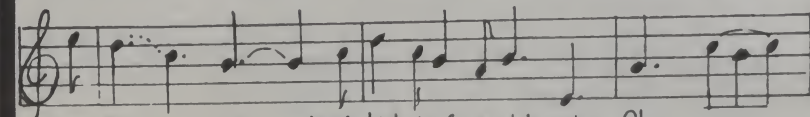
## Gabriel's Message



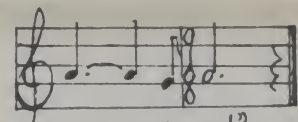
1. The an-gel Ga-bri-el from hea-ven came, His wings as
2. "For known a bless-ed Mo-ther thou shalt be, All ge-ne-
3. Then gen-tle Ma-ry meek-ly bowed her head, "To me be
4. Of her Em-man-u-el, the Christ, was born, In Beth-le



drift-ed snow, his eyes as flame; "All hail," said he, "thou low-ly mai-  
ra-trins loud and hon-or thee. Thy son shall be Em-man-u-el  
as it pleas-eth God," she said. "My soul shall laud and mag-ni-fy  
hem, all on a Christ-mas morn, And Chris-tian folk through-out the world



den Ma-ry, Most high-ly fa-vored la-dy, Glo-  
by seers fore-told, Most high-ly fa-vored la-dy Glo-  
his ho-ly name." Most high-ly fa-vored la-dy, Glo-  
will ev-er say: "Most high-ly fa-vored la-dy, Glo-



- - ri-a!"  
- - ri-a!"  
- - ri-a!"  
- - ri-a!"

This tune is an old Basque carol; the text was written by S. Baring Gould.

Christmas, a more-than-month-long orgy of parties and gift-buying, has become anything but a holy day. All around us the secular world hardly dares mention Christ's name, even preferring "Happy Holidays" to a "Merry (or Blessed) Christmas." But that's not what we participate in; and the music of Christmas helps us in a unique and heart-touching way to keep Christ at the centre of our celebrations.

### Songs teach the faith

It's been said that we learn more theology, and learn it more effectively, via the songs we sing in church than through all the spoken words we hear.

I find that true, and it's because music wedded to text has a peculiar power, the more so when it expresses the faith of

our innermost heart in a way that makes words alone seem inadequate. How often do you fall back on a hymn, a psalm or a carol to embody a biblical truth for yourself, or to voice otherwise inexpressible joy, or grief?

If you page carefully through hymnals and carol books you may be surprised at how many of the Christmas carols, even the idyllic ones, not only celebrate Christ's birth joyfully, but present good basic theology — the whole picture, with allusions to his sacrifice for us, to his reign, and to his coming again. There's really no other body of devotional song that I know of that does this so comprehensively.

The three examples here are carols I find particularly moving and delightful. They are quiet rather than exuberant pieces, eliciting thoughtful wonder and gratitude.



## Feature

## Gold, frankincense and myrrh: three gifts that endured

John Tissot

Her name was Bilquis and she ruled the Land of Saba in southern Arabia. We know her as the Queen of Sheba. The Bible tells us that the Queen of Sheba came to Jerusalem with a very great caravan, with camels carrying spices, large quantities of gold and precious stones... (1 Kings 10:2).

Miller and Goodell, writing in *The Surgeon's Library*, say, "Presumably, the journey was made to effect a trade agreement which included the sale of frankincense and myrrh."

Along with gold, frankincense and myrrh made up the three gifts of the Wise Men to the newly born Christ Child.

We can understand why gold was taken as a gift. Even today everyone rejoices over a gift of gold. But what was the significance of frankincense and myrrh in those days?

### Two resins

Frankincense is a gum resin extracted from a desert shrub called *boswellia carterii* grown in southern Arabia and nearby areas. Legend had it that frankincense trees were guarded by winged serpents and that only an elite tribe could tap the bark of the precious resin.

Myrrh, the resin of a plant that looks like a small cactus without the prickles, was once harvested in Dhofar province where, legend has it, the three kings gathered before following the star of Bethlehem to pay homage to Jesus.

Both frankincense and myrrh were used in making incense and perfumes, and both also had medicinal uses. They became extremely important in the cul-

tures of the Egyptians and the Hebrews. The inhabitants of southern Arabia, Saba, controlled the source of these two products and because they controlled one of the most important trade routes in the early history of that region, they were well on their way to acquiring great power and wealth. No wonder the Queen of Sheba could undertake such a long and costly trip to visit King Solomon. It would all be paid for out of the profits made from the selling of frankincense and myrrh.

### Religious use

Before recorded history, the Hebrews used incense in their religious rites. *Frank* means *free*, and *incense* comes from the Latin word *to burn*. Frankincense burned freely — without flame — and emitted a pleasing odor. Myrrh also had aromatic properties and was usually mixed with frankin-

cense.

Not only the Israelites but the Egyptians wanted the two resins for their religious rites, and they needed large quantities of the "magic two." Additionally, the resins could be burned to cover the obnoxious smells produced when the Egyptians cremated bodies or prepared them for mummification.

### Body lotions

The need did not end there. The Egyptians lived under a hot sun and they wanted lotions to strengthen their skins and perfume them — especially in areas where water was scarce and could not be used for bathing.

The Book of Esther tells us that when young girls were about to enter the court of King Ahasuerus, who ruled from India to Ethiopia, they spent "six months with oil and myrrh

over the area, especially south into Somaliland, we understand that they were looking for frankincense and myrrh.

### Medicines

The gum resins had other useful qualities. The Nubians chewed frankincense for sore mouths. It was suggested as a cure for gout and an agent to stop bleeding. And even today the Arabs use frankincense for stomach problems.

If frankincense had medicinal uses, so did myrrh. It was known to be a powerful antiseptic — sort of the penicillin of its time. It was used in open wounds to prevent infection and it caused wounds to close and heal. In the 18th century it was part of the doctor's medicine bag, on call for treatment of small pox, rheumatism, worms, ulcers and disorders of the

opiate and was sometimes given to condemned men. It was offered to Jesus at the time of his crucifixion. "And they gave him to drink wine mingled with myrrh; but after tasting it he refused to drink it."

Nicodemus provided about 100 pounds of a mixture of myrrh and aloes to anoint Jesus' body before he was buried.

To say that these two gum-resins were the basis for much of the trading that was carried on during the years before the birth of Christ could not be called an exaggeration.

### Modern uses

And what of the three gifts today? Gold needs no discussion. But myrrh, known for its antiseptic properties, survives today, although most people are not aware of it. It can be purchased in almost any health store or wherever herbs and "natural" cures are sold.

As stated in *The Herb Book*, by John Lust, "Myrrh: Antiseptic, astringent, carminative, stomachic. Myrrh makes a good gargle and mouthwash for sores in the mouth and throat, sore teeth and gums, coughs, asthma and other chest problems. It can also be taken internally for bad breath and for loose teeth and weak gums. Its disinfectant properties make myrrh suitable as a wash for sores and wounds. Add myrrh powder to the sore or wound after washing for continued disinfectant activity."

Those could be the instructions Arab doctors gave to their patients 2000 years ago.

### Enduring gifts

*The Modern Dental Materia Medica* by J.P. Buckley (1926) tells us that myrrh can be used as a "local application" for spongy gums and other conditions.

As for frankincense, it is still wanted for use in incense and perfumes. In 1979, Somalia produced more than 2,000 tons of the gum-resin for export to Europe, the United States and Asia.

"We three kings of Orient are..." We're going to hear these words ring out in carols this Christmas season. The gifts of the Wise Men to the new King are almost as useful today as they were then. Enduring gifts for an enduring King.

Author John Tissot writes from Carpinteria, Calif.



and six months with perfumes and cosmetics" (2:12, New English Bible).

When we read that the Egyptians marched their armies all

mouth. It was also used in mummification because it slowed down bacteria which cause disintegration of the flesh.

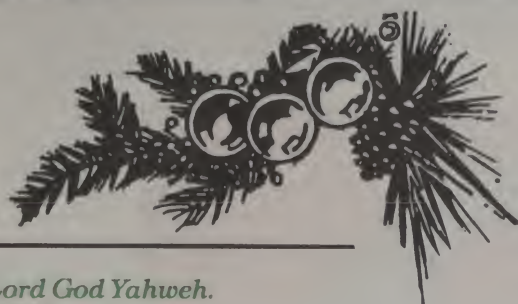
Myrrh could also serve as an



# Advent: an exercise in waiting

Calvin G. Seerveld

Throughout the world the church of Christ turned to Psalm 25 on the first Advent Sunday in the year of our Lord 1997 to hear again what the Spirit says to the churches as they wait for Jesus Christ's coming!



*I yield myself up to You, Lord God Yahweh.*

*With You I feel certain, O God.*

*Don't let me be shamed!*

*Don't let my enemies maliciously laugh at me!*

*—no, nobody who waits for You will be ashamed;  
those who are tricky for no reason at all, they will be shamed.*

*Get me to know how You act, Lord.*

*Teach me how You do things.*

*Bring me along till I follow your kind of faithfulness — teach me that!*

*for You are my God, the one saving me!*

*the whole day I hope, wait to see You [coming]....*

*(Ps. 25:1-5).*

The Advent is a farce, a dumb show, if all it points toward is what historically, irrevocably has already happened — Christ's entrance into time. The Christmas Advent takes on biblical meaning only when believers see the manger scene simultaneously flicker apocalyptically into the tableau of the grown Christ gloriously descending from God's throne as the powerful head of an army of veteran angels. When Christ's first coming is waited for as an exercise in waiting for his second coming, then Advent will have the right *anno Domini* focus.

★★★★★

Vested business interests which use "the Christmas season" like a birthday party to advertise and sell expensive trinkets and luxury items would find it much more difficult to commercialize anticipation of a Final Judgment. And the Church itself could recapture the sense of waiting which takes faith — for something not yet happened, unseen — rather than our usual traditional rote of remembering mixed with nostalgia.

There will be jibes no doubt: so you are waiting for God to come? again? so maybe you are

waiting for Godot?

Then the Church can pray with David: the King of Kings is coming, surely coming. Nobody who waits for you, Lord, will be ashamed, shall they?

Could you *Christian Courier* readers wait three-and-a-half-weeks for the end of the world to come?

That is what Advent means to the true church as a worshipping communion of the saints. That is, can you live expecting Christ to come on December 25th?

I do not mean whether you with equanimity can standoffishly mark time to see whether it happens — that is not Christian waiting. But can you hope, work — only 20 more shopping days till Christ comes! — pray, argue with God that God show up on time, believing God will?

Again, not feverishly "setting your affairs in order" as the expression goes, but rather, joyfully going about your usual daily tasks with an intensity and gladness, great expectations of welcoming the Christ back to earth again in 20 days, when the Lord will wipe away your tears and chuckle the tiredness out of your body.

Of course, this is just make-believe: it takes a little imagination and a lot of sturdy faith to live out a Christian advent. Or would it be make-believe if after

a 20-day vigil of seeking, knocking, arguing, hoping, Christ did come... into one's heart?

★★★★★

Some of us older ones are waiting, waiting, as Joel put it (2:28-29), for you young men to see visions and you young women to prophesy, waiting for all to dream dreams and speak out prophetically in strange tongues of scientific formulae, abstract swirls of painterly color, computer jargon, legal talk and even home-grown slang and popular songs or dance that Christ is the redemptive Lord of creation.

That means a long wait, I suppose, if God gives us the time, because you younger ones don't really want to wait, do you? "Give me the answer now! Let's get married now! Give me my inheritance now!" And if a person cannot wait nine months, a few years, prepare oneself with training, unfold slowly, how can a person expect to have more than a mediocre vision or give more than a shallow prophecy, if at all.

It will be a long wait in most of our congregations also because our sin keeps getting in the way. Middle-aged people

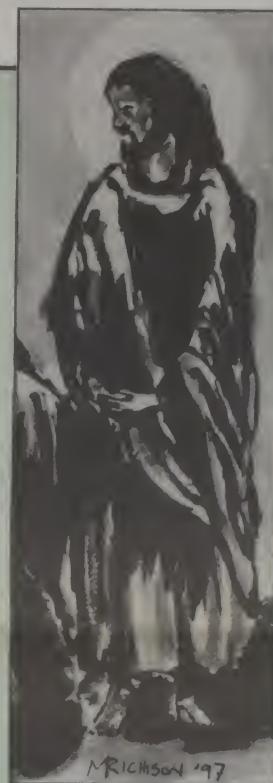
tend to go possessive conservative and fear to rock any theological boats or middle-class economics that will upset their confessional security and hard-won gains. Young persons can be roused from the church's slumbers, step over their elders' bodies strewn about from denominational infighting and face-saving, and mistakenly proclaim the chorus of a simplified gospel which overlooks important differences of creed and deed so that the second evil can become worse than the first.

"Forgive me my proud foolishness, there is so much of it, Lord," says David. We reforming older generation can encourage the coming generation to re-work the faith rather than mouth it, miss the edge, and cause a young one to stumble. And Scripture says that Christ has a set of millstones to fit the thickest senior leader's neck. Will our spiritual sons and daughters "possess" the land as lords? or must we watch them desecrate and leave the church which we older generation have failed to make vital, brimming over with tough love, winsome?

Sometimes you could cry at the way we so inflexibly carry on our churchly business. Cry out: save us from our sins, Lord! Don't let those who stand in awe of you and wait for your Kingdom to come be shamed. Send rich blessings in 20 days! or 40 years, or before it is too late, Lord.

★★★★★

I trust, pray it shall always be Advent and Psalm 25 for readers of *Christian Courier* — "The whole day I hope, wait to see you coming" — that we never act as if we have arrived; that we always feel a bit displaced, hurt, waiting like David; that God give us the faith to wait for gifted, estranged sons and



daughters of Christ's body to come around; and that God give the younger ones the grace not to hate it while we older ones have to recover our first love for the Lord so we can instill and carry out more faithfully the vision of Christ's merciful Rule in schooling the next generation, in formulating labor policies, leading political decisions, reforming business practices.

I truly pray — "The whole day I hope, wait to see you coming" — that God give all of us, together with other saints in distant places and from different biblical faith traditions, some sense of actively waiting for the Lord, so that we find our church congregations and even communities of believers outside the church door to be bodies of reconciliation worth bearing Christ's name.

We yield ourselves, pliable, up to you, Lord God Yahweh.

*Calvin Seerveld is senior member emeritus in aesthetics at the Institute for Christian Studies in Toronto*



## Short Story

# MORE JOY IN HEAVEN

Ephraim T. Phillips

Ten year old Paul shattered the stifling silence. "Why can't we go to see Grandpa tomorrow?"

"Quiet!" snarled his father. "Don't talk about it anymore. You know very well why."

"But dear, the children! It is, after all, Christmas. He is your father," reminded his wife, Tina.

Frank Robinson leaned forward in his favorite arm chair and stared at the carpet.

Paul and Jenny, who were sitting at opposite ends of the fireplace, glanced at each other hopefully. Tina Robinson stood silhouetted in front of the flames, holding her breath as her husband struggled.

"No! I'm not going to apologize. And I am not going over there."

"Please, Dad, I want to see Grandpa," Jenny pleaded. A year younger than Paul, she was keenly sensitive to her grandfather's loneliness and her grandmother's absence.

"Frank, maybe it wasn't his fault. Maybe your mother wanted it this way," suggested Tina.

"I don't believe it," he snapped back. "She always said that she would leave me enough from her own investments so I could open a bicycle shop. She knew how I hate construction work. It's his fault. That over-zealous religious fanatic talked her into giving every dime to an orphanage on the other side of the world. Orphanage, my foot! Someone is lining his pockets with it now." He slumped back into the chair and stared at the fire.

"Frank, just because you were cheated out of your college money when you were young it doesn't mean all religious and charitable organizations are crooked. You shouldn't be so cynical."

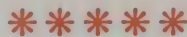
"We're not going this year," he insisted. "It was mostly for my mother's sake that I used to go. Dad and I never got along anyway!"

A bitter silence again engulfed the Robinson home. Tina watched as shadows contorted Frank's unhappy face. She sighed deeply. Maybe he would



change his mind by morning.

"Well," she whispered at last, "off to bed, you two. It's ten o'clock. You'll want to get up early in the morning to open your gifts."



Paul couldn't sleep. He turned and tossed and finally lay quietly on his back. He thought about his grandfather. How he loved the old man with his long white beard. In years past, whenever the family visited the grandparents, Grandpa would fling the door open wide, tower over them and boom, "My, who have we here?" His big blue eyes would dance merrily from Paul to Jenny. They would run at him together and throw their arms around his neck.

Tonight, unaware of the depth of his son's bitterness, Grandpa would be up all night preparing for the Robinson's visit, as he

did every Christmas Eve. His all-night vigils began when Frank was himself only ten. Grandmother's gall bladder operation that year ate up all their savings. She and grandfather hand-made the gifts for their four children.

Grandpa preserved the tradition. Each year he made a present for one member of the family as a reminder of that difficult year, and the love in the family. This year it was Paul's turn.

Paul closed his eyes and remembered Grandpa's house. It stood on a slight rise at the end of a long, willow-lined lane. With his inner eye Paul saw the house was dark except for one large window near the front door where a man's head and huge white beard rocked back and forth, seen even from the road.

Paul sighed deeply and rolled over. He knew that the house looked like that right at that very moment — and that Grandpa

was rocking by the window, unaware that his heart would be broken in a few hours. Unable to sleep, Paul turned on the tiny TV set at the end of his bed. The grey picture sputtered and quavered and finally settled into focus. It was a Christmas program telecast from the big church in the city nearby. The church was packed with happy

worshippers.

He wondered why his parents never took him and Jenny to church.

Grandpa often spoke to their Dad about this, and about "the real meaning of Christmas."

Paul heard that phrase often. What did it mean? He listened. "God loves us so much that he came all the way from heaven as a baby to be with us. How many people will not even go across town this year to church or to see family and friends?" asked the preacher, "because they don't celebrate Christmas, or are angry with someone?" Paul was astonished. If only his

father were listening. He turned the set off, deep in thought.

All the way from heaven, and a baby too, he thought. Why Grandpa lives only twenty miles away and I'm already ten.

He jumped out of bed, dressed quickly and dashed for the door. He opened it slowly with his shoes in one hand. He cautiously entered Jenny's room. She was awake too.

"What's the matter?" she whispered.

"Jenny...." He explained his plan to her. She was eager to go along. "We can be back before daylight and back in bed."

"But, I don't have a bike yet and I can't even ride one!" Jenny reminded him.

"You can sit on the seat at the back of mine. I can pedal for both of us."

The road from the edge of town to Grandpa's wound through the countryside with gentle curves, rises and dips. Paul peddled bravely on, stand-

ing on the pedals to give him more leverage. On and on they rode. Paul was working too hard to speak. Now and then they paused and sat down on the roadside, but it had grown too cold to rest for more than a couple of minutes.

"What time is it?" Jenny asked after what seemed like hours.

"I don't know," admitted Paul. "I forgot my watch. But we must be half way there, at least."

Jenny shuddered. The cold was beginning to pierce her ribs. Paul was standing on the right pedal while it was at the top of its rotation, putting his full weight on it when they heard a crack. He lost his footing, the bike lurched over and they sprawled on the gravel road. "Oh, great!" Paul shouted, "My chain is broken."

"It'll take hours to walk," wailed Jenny, "we'll freeze."

Paul was more hopeful. "Maybe we can hitch a ride."

"Paul, I'm scared."

"Me too," he admitted reluctantly as they began to walk. It was ever colder and snow soon obscured everything. Not a single car came along.

"Paul," gasped Jenny, breathless, "I'm getting awfully cold." Her nose was running and her cheeks were red.

"Yeah, me too," he rasped, feeling soreness in his throat. "It's worse for me," he complained. "I was sweating; now my clothes feel like ice on my skin."

An hour passed but Grandpa's house seemed just as far off. They had no idea where they were. "Paul, look!" They had come to another cross road.

"Jenny, we've got to turn sometime, but when?" I know we have to turn right somewhere near Grandpa's place like Dad always does, but I don't know where we are or when to turn. But we had better turn or we'll go right past." They turned right but it wasn't long before they knew from a huge, unfamiliar rock at the roadside that they had made a mistake.

Back at the crossing the teaming snow was building up on the road and it became difficult to see beyond the edge of the fields.

"Take my hand," Paul demanded. "We mustn't get separated." He looked at his sister's frozen face. Her nose and cheeks were colorless now. He knew his must be too. He could think of no comforting words as his imagination ran off with him.

"Jenny," he whispered in her



Meditation



Are you a shepherd or an astrologer?

H.A. Visser  
(translated by Bert Witvoet)

Christmas is coming soon, and I'm thinking about two groups of people who came to visit God. The first group had little difficulty doing so; for the second group it was a bit more problematic.

That first group was formed by the shepherds — ordinary people, not all that civilized, who lived more or less for themselves. These people found out

in the Night of the Angels that the Messiah had been born, that God had become a human being. They were even told the place where they could find him.

When the angels had finished singing, the shepherds said, "Let's go to Bethlehem and see the things we have been told — let's look at the Word of God become human flesh."

And they jumped up and went to Bethlehem. They saw, they talked and they returned to their

flocks singing.

That's the first group. They are those who, because of their upbringing, their inclination, their religious attitude, almost automatically find their way to Christ, the Word become flesh.

I would almost say from out of their character they meet God in Jesus Christ, born in Bethlehem, died on Golgotha, resurrected the third day. They are the people who really know the purpose of their lives, although

they are often not very respectable — among church people there are a lot of strange birds and weird customers. They live because they know that through Jesus Christ God accepts them and gives them direction and a future. That's why they can praise and thank God just like the shepherds did.

**Forever searching**

That other group has a harder time of it. They are the wise men from the East. They are those people who maintain a strange mixture of belief and superstition.

You know them: they forever search in all kinds of religions

and systems; they immerse themselves in spiritualism, in astrology, in yoga and re-incarnation thoughts. They are constantly on their way to God.

Those wise men from the East took two years to come from Babylon on foot through deserts and over mountains. They stumbled on with tremendous perseverance only because they saw a star in Babylon.

They are the people (and we all know them, perhaps we are among them) who are always searching and never seem to find, but who — and that is the promise of the Christmas story — still arrive. They find God in the child in the manger. They discover in the end that God exists only if you are in conversation with him, if you discover in the living encounter with the Word Become Flesh who he is and what he has in mind for you.

The story of the Magi from the East always moves me because these people have been

They live because they know that through Jesus Christ God accepts them and gives them direction and a future.

ear, "I think we're going to die." Her scream split the sombre darkness. He knew immediately he shouldn't have said it, but he, too, needed to talk about his fears. Jenny wailed pitifully.

"I heard a preacher once on TV say that Jesus died for our sins, that is part of the Christmas story, too. Jenny, are we sinners?"

She stopped howling and stared at her brother. "I don't know what a sinner is. But I did tell Mom I was finished with my homework yesterday when I wasn't."

"And I stole an apple from Sam's fruit market last Saturday," he confessed. It was the only sense of wrong they could relate to, although these things didn't seem that important. "Do you think if we ask Jesus to take us to heaven if we die that he will?"

"I don't care," she protested again. "I don't want to die!"

"Let's pray, Jenny. I've never prayed before but..." She nodded in agreement but wept on. Paul clung to his sister and uttered an awkward prayer. "Jesus, if Jenny and I are sinners please forgive us and take us to heaven if we die."

She stopped crying. They stared into each other's eyes and waited. Nothing happened. "What to do now?" she asked. Paul was uncertain.

"If God would only help us find Grandpa's house," Jenny pleaded. They embraced each

other again in the silent violence of the bitter night, utterly desolate. Christmas Eve, and they were about to die! Hours had passed since either of them thought of home and the packages under the tree. The wind stirred itself up and gathered force until it was howling angrily at them.

"We've got to keep going. We just have to walk before the wind. We can't walk against it or turn sideways. It'll blow us off our feet." He was suddenly optimistic simply because the only other option was despair. "We'll find the house yet."

"OK," she agreed wearily, convinced it was all futile. The wind drove them on relentlessly. After a while it changed direction and so did they. They had no idea how long they had been walking when Paul jerked Jenny's hand and screamed, "Jenny, look!"

They were right beside a wire fence. "Come on," he cried. He put one hand on the fence and followed it into what appeared to be a lane. The wind pressed them on but the snow subsided a bit for a few moments. Ahead of them was a square patch of light. A grey head with a huge white beard rocked back and forth.

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Grandpa didn't greet them with a merry twinkle in his eyes.

"Oh, Lord," he gasped and stared speechlessly at them.

It took an hour before wet cloths were removed, Jenny was bedded down in the guest room and Paul was settled into Grandpa's bed. But first, they told Grandpa how God had used the wind to answer their prayer.

The doctor arrived within an hour in a horse-drawn sleigh. Frank was surprised to hear his father's voice in the middle of the night, and shocked to learn where the children were. Before he fell asleep Paul had managed to explain the circumstances of this unusual visit.

Grandpa rocked by the window again when everything was settled down. He continued to work on the flute he was making for Paul, occasionally pausing to blow his nose or wipe an eye with a large handkerchief. "So, my son is still angry with me and won't celebrate Christmas with me!" How he longed for his wife.

He glanced at the fireplace where the children's clothing hung weeping large drops on the hearth. Like Christ's blood, he thought as the crimson flames glistened in the watery transparency. It reminded him that Easter was part of Christmas. He stared out of the window. The snow was blowing down as if nature were tiring. In a few hours Frank would come, but not for dinner.

The anxious jangle of the telephone startled him. "Frank?"

He could say no more. There was a long pause at the other end.

"Dad, I called back to, to..."

Frank wept softly. His father listened and blew his nose and wiped his eyes again. "Dad, I've been thinking about the kids. They could have frozen to death by morning and, well, you're not so young anymore, and we just lost Mom..." He broke off again. Soft tears flowed from his softened heart.

"Dad, I think I understand now how Grandma felt about those orphans. They have no one. I've taken you all for granted, especially the kids, and most of all you." He inhaled deeply and asked, "Can you forgive me?"

Grandpa Robinson coughed into the phone and struggled to control his voice. "Merry Christmas, son. The roads should be better in the morning. The snow is slowing down already. See you for dinner. Remember, I'm a fantastic cook!"

Frank laughed happily. "Right after church, Dad."

Grandpa almost dropped the phone. He replaced the receiver and glanced up. "Yeah, I know! I feel like singing too!"

Ephraim T. Phillips is the pen name of a fiction writer who lives in Dundas, Ont.

confronted with unbelief, resistance, hate towards Christ. They had all kinds of reasons to break with the faith, but they didn't do it.

If only we belong to one of these two groups. It is possible that you have never really addressed the question: "Why am I alive?" And because of that you have never truly addressed the question which has everything to do with your life and happiness: "Does God really exist?"

Rev. Visser is a pastor in the Netherlands who used to give radio talks entitled Onder de hoogtezon ("Under the muddy sun").



## Feature

## Sonya VanderVeen Feddema

Christmas is a celebration of the Word, Jesus, who came to dwell among us. This Christmas season, give a special gift of words to glorify the Word. It's a gift you can give to others, to God and to yourself, all at once!

Curious?

It's the gift of a Christmas liturgy.

Liturgy? you might ask. Only people on worship committees write liturgies for church services, right?

Not so!

Liturgies you create can be given as gifts to your family, friends, or groups you are involved in.

For several years I have written liturgies for the women's Bible study group I participate in, to be used at Christmas, Easter and for other events. In order to challenge you to create a gift liturgy, allow me to share the steps I take when writing one.

I begin by asking the Holy Spirit, "What do you want me to say? What theme and songs will speak to the participants?" The Spirit knows the needs of all those who will take part in the liturgy. He understands their sadness, joy, fear and where they are on their journey with God. The Holy Spirit's power can transform your liturgy into a means of grace for someone

Gear your liturgy to your audience. When writing for your family, keep in mind the varying ages of your children so they can each participate in some way and understand the theme.

If you write a liturgy for your women's Bible study group, remember the varying levels of faith maturity of the women. Keep your liturgy simple for new believers, yet meaningful for mature Christians. If you create a liturgy for members of an old age home, include traditional carols that many will remember from their youth. In each case, write your liturgy in such a way that all participants can be involved in some way, either by reading, singing or praying.

Choose a theme and build your liturgy on it by selecting relevant Scripture passages and picking appropriate songs. Your Bible concordance is a valuable resource, as is the index of your church's hymnal.

When I wrote a liturgy entitled, "Jesus, Rising Sun, Shine On Us," I based my theme on Zechariah's words about Jesus: "The rising sun shall come to us from heaven to shine on those living in darkness..." (Luke 1: 78b-79a). In my concordance I looked up *light, sun and*

*darkness*, and chose the passages that seemed pertinent. Next, I checked the index of my hymnal under *Christmas* and *light*. Instead of choosing all the verses of each relevant song, I chose only those that developed my theme.

### A unified whole

As you combine passages, narration, songs and prayers around a theme, you'll create a unified whole — a Christmas package of praise. Your family, friends or group will benefit from your liturgy because they will focus on God and celebrate his goodness. And God will receive the gift of their exaltation!

But how will you benefit by writing a liturgy?

As you pray, reveal more about his thoughts on you, new truths about his worship him.

Get your pen and your computer! And among us, to guide creating a word prese

# Jesus, Rising

### Sing: Hark! The Herald Angels

Hail the heaven-born Prince of Peace,  
Hail the Sun of Righteousness!  
Light and life to all he brings,  
risen with healing on his wings.  
Mild he lays his glory by,  
born that we no more may die,  
born to raise the lost on earth,  
born to give them second birth.

### Refrain:

Hark! the herald angels sing,  
"Glory to the newborn King!"

### Leader:

Jesus, the rising sun that Zechariah spoke of,  
Seemingly powerless, the Son of God

Reader 5: Luke 2:1-7.

### Sing: Silent Night! Holy Night (Stanza 1)

Silent night! Holy night! All is calm, all is bright,  
Round yon virgin mother and child!  
Holy infant so tender and mild,  
Sleep in heavenly peace! Sleep in heavenly peace!

Silent night! Holy night! Son of God, source of light,  
now lies crying in Bethlehem's stall,  
tiny child, Creator of all,  
infant, Savior, and King! infant, Savior, and King!

### Leader:

When shepherds saw the brilliant light of the angel,  
the Lord, they heard the startling good news of salvation.

Reader 6: Luke 2:8-14.

### Sing: O Come, All Ye Faithful (Stanza 3)

Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation,  
Sing, all ye bright hosts of heaven above:  
"Glory to God, all glory in the highest!"

### Refrain:

O come, let us adore him,  
O come, let us adore him,  
O come, let us adore him,  
Christ the Lord!

## Christmas liturgy by Sonya VanderVeen Feddema

(Each participant will have a candle, in order to participate towards the end of the liturgy.)

### Leader:

In his prophetic song after the birth of his son, John, Zechariah said, "The rising sun shall come to us from heaven to shine on those living in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the path of peace" (Luke 1:78b-79).

### Reader 1:

Who is the rising sun?

### Leader:

"The people walking in darkness have seen a great light" (Isaiah 9:2a).

### Reader 2:

Who is the light the people saw?

### Leader:

"On those living in the land of the shadow of death a light has dawned" (Isaiah 9:2b).

### Reader 3:

Who is the light that chased away the shadows of death?

### Leader:

"Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord rises upon you. See, darkness covers the earth and thick darkness is over the peoples, but the Lord rises upon you and his glory appears over you. Nations will come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawn" (Isaiah 60:1-3).

### Sing: O Come, O Come, Immanuel (Stanza 6)

O come, O Bright and Morning Star  
and bring us comfort from afar!  
Dispel the shadows of the night  
and turn our darkness into light.

### Refrain:

Rejoice! Rejoice!  
Immanuel shall come to you,  
O Israel.

### Reader 4:

"For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counsellor. Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of the Lord Almighty will accomplish this" (Isaiah 9:6-7).



# un, Shine on Us

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ce!

if, was born in a stable.  
to earth as a baby.

and 4)

Silent night! Holy night! Son of God, loves pure light  
shines away from your heavenly face,  
greet the hour of redeeming grace,  
Jesus, Lord at your birth! Jesus, Lord at your birth!

presence and the dazzling glory of  
on.

## Leader:

The shepherds didn't hoard the good news. They went out and spread the light of the gospel, telling others what they had heard about the Christ.

Reader 7: Luke 2:15-20.

## Sing: Go, Tell It on the Mountain (Stanzas 1, 2 and 3).

### Refrain:

Go, tell it on the mountain,  
over the hills and everywhere.  
Go, tell it on the mountain,  
that Jesus Christ is born.

The shepherds feared and trembled  
when lo! above the earth  
rang out the angel chorus  
that hailed our Savior's birth. **Refrain:**

While shepherds kept their watching  
o'er silent flocks by night,  
behold, throughout the heavens  
there shone a holy light. **Refrain:**

Down in a lowly stable  
the humble Christ was born  
and God sent us salvation  
that blessed Christmas morn. **Refrain:**

(At this point the leader lights her candle. She holds it up high when she comes to Jesus' words, "I am the light...")

## Leader:

Long ago the prophets foretold that Jesus would be the light. And while on earth, Jesus confirmed what they said: "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life" (John 8:12).

(When the leader has read this passage, she lights the candle of Candleholder 1. At this point Candleholder 1 speaks....)

## Candleholder 1:

Shine your light on us, Jesus, so we will be guided on your path. Your path leads to peace with God and peace with our neighbors. Without your light, we will stumble in spiritual darkness.

(Candleholder 1 lights the candle of Candleholder 2. This process of lighting candles from one candleholder to the next continues.)

## Candleholder 2:

Jesus, shine your light on us so we will grow spiritually. Just like all living things on earth need light to grow, we need your light to grow spiritually. Without your light, we will die.

## Candleholder 3:

Shine your light on us, Jesus, so our hearts will be warm and loving to others, forgiving them as you have forgiven us our sins. We need your warmth in our hearts so we'll strive to restore broken relationships, to love those whom we dislike or hate, to give ourselves to others as you continually give yourself to us.

## Candleholder 4:

Shine your light on us, Jesus, and destroy the shadow of death. Save us from spiritual death. Take away any fear of death we may have. Thank you that your perfect love in us casts away our fears and fills us with courage.

## Candleholder 5:

Jesus, Sun of righteousness, rise over us with healing in your wings (Malachi 4:2). Heal us by restoring us to God through the forgiveness of our sins. Heal us from the consequences of our sins and our wrong choices. Heal us from emotional, psychological and physical pain.

(There will be a moment of silence when the candleholders light the candles of all other participants.)

## All:

Jesus said about his followers in the past and today, "You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your deeds and praise your Father in heaven" (Matt. 5:14-16).

## Leader: Prayer

Shatter our darkness with your light!  
Usher in day! Obliterate night!  
Jesus, rising sun, we give you praise.  
Help us to love you every day!



## Short Story

# ABERNATHY'S CHRISTMAS

James Harold Jones

I had a weekly *Liberty* magazine route in 1934 during the Great Depression. I felt kind of lucky, since I was barely thirteen. My name is Abernathy Woolcott, but most folks call me Ab. It was almost Christmas, and I'd been saving my money to buy an electric toaster for Ma and a pair of work gloves for Pa.

When my magazines came in a few days before Christmas, I paid for thirty issues and began my delivery. I made two stops, then detoured over the hill to the rich folks' part of town where Mr. Banks' shiny new Buick was parked in front of his house. He was my Pa's boss, and only two weeks ago, he'd cut Pa's work down to two days a week; Ma called him "Old Scrooge," and Pa had to sell firewood to make ends meet.

Mr. Banks' maid gave me a nickel for the magazine.

When I headed back towards the street, I was shocked to see Butch McGonigle, the town bully, standing beside my bike.

"Well, well, if it ain't Abernathy, the teacher's pet. Whatcha doin' with all these pretty books?" He made my name sound like a dirty word.

"Get out of my way. I've got work to do," I said.

He shook the handlebar back and forth.

"Cut that out. You're gonna

knock my magazines in the gutter. I gotta deliver them."

"That so?" He suddenly jerked the bike over, and every magazine in the basket landed in the black slush running along the gutter. He twisted his boots on the magazine covers and ruined them all.

"Oh, oh. Looks like your bike fell over. See you around." His lips curled into an ugly sneer as he strutted down the walk.

Tears of anger and frustration clouded my eyes as I looked at the total loss. "I wish I had a big

brother to beat the snot out of that big goon. Now I gotta pay another dollar to replace them, and that's the end of any Christmas presents," I muttered as I finally gave up trying to salvage anything out of the mess.

I was still upset as I pushed the bike back up the path over the hill. At the top, there was a huge boulder, sitting right on the edge of the decline. I kicked at it in disgust, then couldn't believe it when the rock started rolling down the hill. A shudder racked my body when the huge rock hit

work. Even though no one was at home, I finally felt safe when I walked in the house. I grabbed a cookie and flopped into a chair.

Ma had left the open Bible lying on the table. I pulled it over to me while I jammed another cookie in my mouth. It was turned to the 23rd Psalm.

I had a cookie halfway to my mouth when I saw the words, "I will fear no evil; for thou art with me."

I read the line again and thought, "Uh-oh. I sure didn't

"I — uh — I had a little problem out front when I was here before. I need to talk to Mr. Banks to explain what happened."

"Oh. I watched through the curtains while he talked to that other boy. Mr. Banks was red in the face and waving his arms, and I could tell from here that he was plenty mad. He finally put that boy in his car and drove off."

"I guess you don't know where he went, do you?"

"No."

McGonigle brat was all too anxious to tell me how it was all young Mr. Abernathy's fault. What he failed to tell me was how all those magazines wound up in my gutter. They had been deliberately ruined, and since it happened so soon after my magazine arrived, I knew there was something fishy. When I questioned that boy, he turned red and stammered that the bike had fallen over, but I knew that was a bare-faced lie."

Mr. Banks turned to me. "Fortunately for you and me both, my car was still drivable. I packed that kid in the car and took him home to his parents. His father shook a lung loose in him, and the boy finally admitted he had an argument with you. His father insisted on giving me a dollar for you to pay for those magazines. Here's your money. I trust that it's enough."

"Yes, sir. Thank you, Mr. Banks." I smiled as I realized that I now had the money to buy my Christmas presents.

"Now, about the car. My insurance will pay for that in full. My only question is, why did you run? Didn't it occur to you that I may have understood?"

"Not at first. I was afraid that my pa would get fired. I did go back to see you later, but you were gone. I didn't think the rock would roll down the hill. I'm sorry about what happened."

"Er, harrumph. That is, I see... — Mr. Woolcott, why don't you work every day next week? We need to do the inventory before year's end."

"Great! I mean... I'd be happy to. Thank you, Mr. Banks."

"And you, young man," Mr. Banks added. "I think you should sweep out my store every day during the Christmas holidays. Perhaps it'll make you think about the stupid trick you pulled."

As he walked out on the stoop, Ma said, "Merry Christmas, Mr. Banks."

"Er, that is, yes, indeed. And Merry Christmas to all of you."



Pa had to sell firewood to make ends meet.



act like that. I was plenty scared."

I read the line once more and said aloud, "Maybe it won't be so bad when I go back to see Old Scrooge."

After I took a dollar out of my savings, there

was only a few cents left. I rode down to the newsstand and paid for 27 more magazines.

When I finished my route and returned to Mr. Banks' house, his car was gone, and I thought maybe he'd put it in his garage. I was as jumpy as a turpentine cat when I rang the doorbell.

"Stop shakin', dummy," I said to myself. "You're not 'sposed to be scared." I clasped my hands behind my back to help stop the shaking.

The maid told me Mr. Banks wasn't home.

"When he comes back, tell him I was here. My name's Ab Woolcott. We don't have a telephone."

"I know who you are. I'll tell him."

"Okay. Thanks."



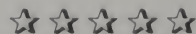
Pa was awful mad when I first told him what happened, but he finally calmed down and started worrying about Mr. Banks. He wondered if he'd get fired.

Then the doorbell rang, and Pa's face turned ashy white when I opened the door. It was Mr. Banks, and Pa started stammerin'. "Uh — I — uh —. The boy didn't mean to damage your car. It was an accident."

"Harrumph. May I come in?" Mr. Banks said.

"Yes, sir, please come in."


Mr. Banks stepped inside and said, "I wish to tell you right off that I know what happened. That



Pa was out cutting firewood and Ma was doing some church

James Jones lives in Albuquerque, New Mexico.







**The Wise  
Still Seek  
Him**

May the humble birth of  
Jesus light your way  
this Christmas season  
and in the coming year.

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celebrate the birth of the King.

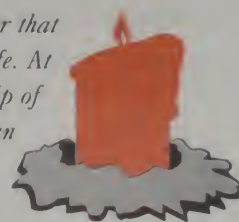
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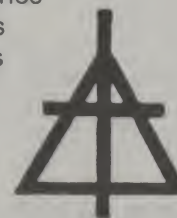
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## Short Story



## A father and son Christmas



Cathy Smith

Dad and I were having coffee with our neighbors, the Rutherfords, when the Hogemans drove past on their way to our farm. "There they are," I announced. Dad nodded that he had seen the gleaming black Coupe deVille inching along the icy sideroad.

"Nice car," George Rutherford whistled. "Those your friends from Windsor? What's their name, again?"

"Hogeman. Corrie and Adrian."

"They're from your home town in Holland, right?" Mrs. Rutherford asked.

"No, actually, Corrie is from Wilma's village," said Dad. "She and Wilma were friends as children. They don't have any family in Canada so they always spend Christmas with us." Dad sipped his coffee. Then he asked, "How were the roads when you went to your candle-light service last night?"

"Slippery, but we made it. It was a nice evening, wasn't it, Emma?"

Though I was now 19, I still couldn't conceive of addressing the formidable Mrs. Rutherford as Emma. She plowed straighter than Dad and, at 71, she still delivered calves with sturdy and steady hands.

"Oh, yes," she agreed. She rose and went to the counter. "The tree was decorated beautifully. The Sunday school children trimmed it all in gold. When the candles were lit, it was just lovely." She returned with the coffee pot poised. "More coffee, Albert? Or do you have to be going?"

Dad pushed his mug over to her. I felt it my duty to speak up.

"Dad, didn't Mom say something about coming home before the Hogemans arrived?"

Dad pursed his lips and waved a placating hand at me. "We'll head over in a minute. Mom will get them a coffee. I don't want to run out on George and Emma with all of these Christmas goodies on the table. Emma, you must have been baking for weeks."

Mrs. Rutherford's face beamed at this recognition. "How was your church service this morning?" she asked, refilling our cups. "I still can't get used to you folks going to



*I got up. It seemed like a good time to escape. "Would you like to look at this magazine, Mr. Hogeman? I should really give Dad some help in the barn."*

church on Christmas morning. Doesn't seem right to me, somehow." The Rutherfords were Anglicans, and went to a late-night Christmas Eve service. She added, "Did you hand out your presents last night, like you always do?"

Dad smiled. They were good friends. Mrs. Rutherford's blunt observations about the eccentricities of her Dutch neighbors were easily forgivable. To her, we were Dutch and would be Dutch forever, even though Dad and Mom had been in Canada for almost thirty years.

"Yup, all the kids were over last night for a couple of hours. Ken and Wilma and I got up a little extra early this morning because of the ice, but we got to church without a problem." There was a slight pause. Dad concluded, "Well, whether you're there on Christmas Eve or Christmas morning, it's good to celebrate the real meaning of Christmas, isn't it?" To punctuate that thought, Dad dipped a gingerbread man into

his coffee.

I was getting fidgety. Mom would be casting anxious glances out the kitchen window to see whether we were on our way. Since the Hogemans always came on Christmas Day, there was no excuse not to be ready for them.

As a boy, I had dreaded their annual visits. Their only child, William, was my age, but he was bigger and meaner. He never failed to break whatever gift I treasured most. He broke my pellet gun when I was 10, and my hockey game when I was 11. I would complain to Mom who would scold me for being petty. I was supposed to share. It was Christmas, after all.

Even then I had an inkling about why he was careless. He had so many toys, he just didn't understand the value of my few special things. Fortunately, by the time he was 15 or so, he no longer cared to join his parents for their Christmas visit to the farm, and I didn't have to put up

with him anymore.

When the last of the cookies had been complimented and consumed, Dad finally pushed back his chair. We said goodbye and drove home. Mom, in her apron, met us at the kitchen door. "Albert. Ken. There you are. See, Corrie and Adrian are here already."

Dad poked his head around her to greet them. "You made it, eh? We were just at the neighbors for a little Christmas cheer. Sorry, we weren't here sooner." He hung up his coat in the mudroom and entered the kitchen with me behind him. "How are you, Adrian? Corrie? How was the drive from Windsor?" Everyone shook hands.

"I was hoping you'd be home for the holidays, Ken," Mrs. Hogeman said. "You're off to college now, aren't you?"

"Yes, I'm at Calvin. I'm just taking a general program for now, till I know what I want to be when I grow up." I chuckled at my own joke, but only half-heartedly because I really had

no idea what I wanted to do with my life, and it bothered me.

While Mom bustled around setting the table, the rest of us sat down in the adjoining family room. "Well, young fella," launched Mr. Hogeman. "I'm not convinced that there's good value in getting an education these days. You take our William, for example. He already has a good job, straight out of high school, and he's making good money. He's in a position to get a promotion soon. Sells siding, you know. For AlCan. It's the best on the market. With houses going up as fast as they are in Tecumseh, he's set to do well for himself. He's got a girlfriend, too, already. Pretty serious, I'd say. What do you think, Corrie? You think William and Nancy are going to get married?"

"Maybe. Who knows? They're with Nancy's family today." Her spritely tone belied the clouded look in her eyes, I thought.

She gave me an inquiring



look. "What about you, Ken? Have you met anyone special at Calvin?"

I squirmed inside. When it came to girls, I was way out in left field. "Nah," I covered. "I'm too busy hitting the books to worry about that yet."

Laughing, Mom came to my rescue. "Leave my baby alone, Corrie. I'm not ready to have him married off yet. Here, Ken, can you help me with this turkey?" I went over to the stove.

**"Funny to think that the Son of God was born in a barn, eh Dad?" I mused. "Though you never see any pigs in a nativity scene, do you?"**

"There's one thing that is worth studying, though," Mr. Hogeman continued. "Economics. If you're going to spend all that tuition, Ken, you should learn about the marketplace. Economics, that's the thing."

I grimaced to myself at the thought. I'd been leaning more towards history — teaching?

Not waiting for a reply, he directed his attention to Dad. "How's farming these days, Albert? Still rough as usual?"

Dad's forehead furrowed. "Yeah. Same old story. I sometimes think the government is doing its level best to make things difficult for us. Want to hear the latest? I have to register myself as a farmer and pay \$150 for the privilege. Then, if I make a special written request, I can get the money back next year. What a lot of paper shuffling for nothing!"

Mr. Hogeman lit up a cigar. Circlets of smoke wafted up to the ceiling. "I'd have to disagree with you there, Albert. I've read about this in the paper. It gives people jobs, for one thing, and it's a way to unite you farmers. You can lobby with one voice."

Dad shook his head. "We're an independent bunch. And, besides, what's good for chicken and dairy farmers is not always good for hog farmers. It's just like that free trade thing a few years ago. I still can't see how that was good for our country. How can I compete with farmers down south who don't have to heat barns?"

Mr. Hogeman was shaking his head, too, more empathically. His ruddy complexion deepened. "No, Albert, I can assure

you that free trade was good for Canada. It sparked the business world. You know I've been in retail ever since I came to this country, and it was the best thing for us! You've always disliked the Conservatives, that's all." He jabbed his cigar meaningfully in the air.

"Well, I know where their loyalties lie. It's not with the little guy, let me tell you that." Dad's voice was getting edgy.

Corrie rose abruptly to help Mom. There was a palpable ur-

gency in the kitchen to have Christmas dinner underway. Soon all was ready. Dad asked for a blessing on the meal and gave thanks for the birth of the Savior.

from the *Time* magazine I was leafing through, surprised. He usually didn't go out so early.

Mom and Mrs. Hogeman were cleaning up the dishes and chatting earnestly about Corrie's sister, Gertie, in Holland who had not been well. Mr. Hogeman lit another cigar and ruminated for a time. Then he fixed a purposeful eye on me.

"You know, Ken, no matter what your dad says, free trade is a good thing for this nation. You take my company, for example. We increased our profit margin by three per cent the first year it went into effect." Hogeman owned a franchised lumberyard. Probably how William got his lucrative siding job, I groused to myself. He puffed a few times, and then leaned towards me.

I got up. It seemed like a good time to escape. "Would you like to look at this magazine, Mr. Hogeman? I really should give Dad some help in the barn." Mom turned slightly from the sink, shooting me a curious glance. It was rare for me to offer to help with chores.

I had just remembered, however, that Dad had brought home a trunk of books from a farm auction in the fall. He had stored it in the hayloft because Mom wouldn't let him bring any more old books into the house. Maybe there's something I can use, I told myself. It was worth a check.

I threw on a coat, walked the short distance to the main barn and entered the feed room. Through the open door opposite I could make out the indistinct crates of the sow barn. Everything was dim and quiet. Dad hadn't started the chores, then.

I climbed the short ladder to the hayloft. There was Dad. He was on his knees in front of the trunk, his back towards me, sorting books. There were a couple of piles on either side of him. It

was cold, and his vaporized breath hung about his head. He rubbed his hands briskly, and then dug in for another book. As I hoisted myself over the edge, he spun around.

"Oh, Ken! It's you. You gave me a start! What's up?"

"I thought I'd have a look to see if there were any books here I could use next semester." I grinned at him slyly. "You should have seen the look on your face, Dad. Like a preacher meeting an elder at a bar."

He smiled and shrugged sheepishly. "Well, one thing I can always count on, son. Adrian never volunteers to come into the barn. Too smelly for him, I guess."

He closed the trunk lid. "Nothing in here but old *Reader's Digest Condensed Books* and *Farmer's Almanacs*. Nothing you would want to take back to Calvin. Except this, maybe." He bent down to pick up the book at his feet. "Look at this Bible I found. It's pretty old, I think."

The title *Hurlbut's Story of the Bible*, was inscribed in gold and dark green cover. On the inside leaf, in red and black lettering, was written: "God's Word. Told in the Simple Language of Today for Young and Old." It had been published in 1904. We flipped through it, glancing at the old-fashioned illustrations. The flight into Egypt was a detailed color plate, while the manger scene was merely a

small black and white sketch. Apart from a rugged post in the centre of the picture, it was hardly even stable-like. "Look, Dad," I said. "Not a lamb or cow to be seen. No shepherds, or wisemen. Just angels."

**We climbed down the ladder with our antique treasure and** stood for a minute in the feed room, listening to the contented snuffling and snorting of the sows. "Funny to think that the Son of God was born in a barn, eh Dad?" I mused. "Though you never see any pigs in a nativity scene, do you?"

"No, you don't. Because pigs were unclean, I guess. Good thing pork is OK now, or we'd be out of business!" He laughed, and went over to the open door leading to the pens. He stood for a brief moment staring down the aisle. Then he turned back to me. "It's humbling, isn't it? God's Son in a place like this. Not too proud for a poor man's barn. Willing to put up with the stench and far worse."

Dad's mood was unimproving. He slapped me on the back and gave me a wink. "Come on, Ken. We can't be standing here all Christmas Day. We've got guests!"

He latched the feed room door behind us, and we hurried to the house, eager to share our find with the others.

*Cathy Smith is a short story writer living in Wyoming, Ont.*

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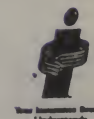


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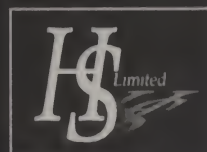
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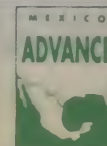


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## Children's Story

# Sam's Prize



Alyson Cresswell Moorcock

It was dark when Mr. Parker finally arrived home from checking the animals around the farm. Lucy had switched on the outside light so he could see his way in. She stood at the back door as he came up the steps. He was smiling and there was a bulge in his jacket.

"What's in there?" Lucy asked.

"Just a little something," her father replied. He unzipped his jacket. A little white head popped through the gap. Fluffy, wool-covered ears stuck out like wings.

"Ooh," Lucy squealed. "A lamb. Is he mine? Can I keep him?"

Her father laughed and withdrew the lamb from his jacket. "Yes, you can keep him. Poor little thing's lost his mother. You're old enough to look after him all by yourself, aren't you?"

"Oh, yes," said Lucy, cuddling the lamb. "Sam," she added. "I'm going to call him Sam."

Sam spent his first night in a box in the laundry. Lucy lined the box with two worn-out old jerseys.

"I don't want him getting cold," she explained to her parents.

The next day she took her new friend out to the pet paddock where there was an old tin drum for shelter. The lamb quickly learned to drink from a bottle. He was a very hungry lamb and came running every time Lucy called him, though she didn't just visit him at his meal times. After school and weekends Lucy played with her pet. They spent hours playing chase around the pet paddock. Sam leapt and bounded as he ran after his adopted mother.

\*\*\*

One day Sam met Lucy on the driveway as she returned home from school.

"How did you get out?" the girl asked. Sam just looked at her. "Come on then," she said, and Sam followed her back to his home.

He repeated the escape on the following three days. Each time he quietly followed Lucy as she led him back to his paddock. After the fourth time, Lucy sat and watched after she had returned Sam to his home. Within minutes the lamb had wriggled out under the wooden gate.

"Gotcha!" said Lucy as she sent him back. She found a wooden box, and placed it in the gap. The box was too heavy for Sam to move so he stayed in his paddock.

Mrs. Parker helped her daughter make a collar from an old leather belt. Sam didn't like it. He tried rubbing against a fence post. He tried hooking it with his right front foot. The collar didn't budge and he finally gave up.

Lucy attached a lead to the collar. Each time she tugged on the rope Sam planted all four feet firmly on the ground and would not budge. In despair, after several days of trying, the girl gave up and disconnected the lead.

"He'll never win a prize at Pets' Day," she told her parents.

"He might win a prize for the Biggest Lamb," said her father.

"Or maybe the Fastest Drinker," said Lucy's mother.

\*\*\*

Pets' Day was held on a Tuesday, giving all the children a day off school. The day began with the pets being



PAULA SIMMONS

"Ooh," Lucy squealed. "A lamb. Is he mine? Can I keep him?"

led around a roped-off ring. Lucy heard adults laughing as she tugged on Sam's lead, dragging the lamb behind her.

Calf judging was first, and Lucy watched with pride as her best friend was awarded first prize for the jersey heifer calf she had raised.

Then came judging of the lambs. One of the big boys won first prize for the Nicest Looking Lamb. The lamb next to Sam was awarded first prize for being the Biggest Lamb, and Lucy had to agree that the winner was a lot bigger than Sam.

There were five lambs entered in the Fastest Drinker section. Each was given half a bottle of milk to drink.

Lucy was sure Sam would win. He was always hungry, and he had a full bottle of milk twice each day, so a half bottle wouldn't be any problem for him.

Sam stopped drinking halfway through, coughed, then

finished the milk. But he hadn't been quick enough. He came in third.

\*\*\*

Lucy felt like crying. She had been so sure her lamb would win a prize, but there were no prizes left. She scuffed her shoes across the grass to where her parents waited. She left Sam alone inside the roped-off pen. He stood for a moment, then walked under the rope and trotted after the girl like a well-trained dog.

He caught up with Lucy halfway across the grass. Sam

pushed his nose against Lucy's hand, giving her fingers a gentle nibble.

"It's not your fault, Sam," said Lucy, kneeling on the grass to give the lamb a hug.

"Excuse me, young lady," said a man's voice.

Lucy looked up into the smiling face of one of the judges.

"There was another prize we left awarding until now," explained the man. "It's a very special prize, because we were looking for the Friendliest Lamb. We think this little fellow fits the requirements."

"Why?" asked Lucy.

"Well," said the man, "he obviously follows you because he wants to, not just because you tell him to. That shows how much care and love you've shown him, how well you've looked after him." He pinned the first prize ribbon onto Sam's collar.

"Look what we've got," Lucy called to her parents. They hurried across to see. "It's Sam's prize, really," she added. "because he's so lovely."

"It does actually belong to you as well," said Mr. Parker. "because you've done such a good job of caring for Sam. I'm very proud of you."

Lucy grinned, and gave Sam a long hug.

Alyson Cresswell Moorcock is a freelance writer who lives in Palmerston North, New Zealand.



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## Church

# Sierra Leone to return to civil rule by spring

## Ministries now carried on by nationals

Keith Knight

FREETOWN, Sierra Leone (CRWC) — Sierra Leone's ruling junta and the Nigeria-led West African peacekeeping troops reached preliminary agreement on November 11 (Remembrance Day), drawing Sierra Leone closer to a planned return to civil rule by next spring. The agreement came after a day of talks on the restoration of democratic rule.

Peacekeeping force commander Major General Victor Malu said an accord had been reached "on all issues except three, which will be dealt with

by special committees" that will meet shortly. Both sides agreed to reopen the ferry link across the estuary between the capital and the airport, which is in peacekeepers' hands, and the suspension of all "unnecessary checkpoints" within three days.

## Transferring power

The high-level talks were held to outline details of the transfer of power from junta head Major Johnny Paul Koroma to Ahmad Tejan Kabbah, the president he ousted in a coup in May. Under the accord signed in October, the handover is slated for April 1998, bringing an end to a year of military rule and social and political instability. Among issues still under discussion are

the role of Nigeria and military disarmament during the transition.

Humanitarian aid to the country was restored by November 15. "There are many organizations waiting in neighboring Guinea to bring in urgent food assistance, said Malu. Expatriate staff of most agencies, including Christian Reformed World Missions, fled the country shortly after the May 25 coup which led the West African peacekeeping force to impose a comprehensive naval and air embargo on Sierra Leone. (Christian Reformed World Relief Committee works with national partners in Sierra Leone and does not have expatriate staff in the country.)

Sierra Leone has a warm place in the hearts of Christian Reformed Church members because it was the focus of a denomination-wide hunger awareness campaign in the 1970s and a place where CRWC worked vigorously. It also be-

came the first fully integrated field involving World Missions and World Relief staffs and programs under one umbrella. Today, much of the development works is being carried out by national staffs and organizations.

## Canadian pilot leads Mission Aviation Fellowship

GUELPH, Ont. — A young Canadian pilot with 10 years of experience as a missionary in Angola and Tanzania has been commissioned as the new executive director of Mission Aviation Fellowship of Canada. Brad Fretz, 36, succeeds Eugene Parkins as head of the Canadian branch of the Christian charity that sends pilots, aviation engineers, mechanics, communications technicians, doctors and teachers to assist remote and isolated people groups throughout the world.

## Three purposes

The pilots provide transportation for missionaries and church workers, and also deliver personnel, food and medical supplies for such non-government groups as the World Food Programme.

"We have three main purposes as a ministry, the most important of which is to help bring the Word of God to unreached people. Our airplanes reach places where there are no roads or where road transportation is too difficult or dangerous," Fretz said.

"We also believe that we need to be available for relief work. That's why we fly for groups providing food, medicine or essential services to people who really need help.

"Our third purpose is to teach aviation and leadership skills to nationals so they can eventually assist their own communities."

Fretz was previously program manager in Angola, where 14 missionary families with Mission Aviation Fellowship of Canada are supporting the struggling churches. At the invitation

of the Angolan churches, the Canadian ministry first began work there in 1989 during that country's devastating civil war.

## In 30 countries

Mission Aviation Fellowship of Canada began as a Canadian charity 25 years ago and works together with many other international Mission Aviation Fellowship organizations serving needy people in 30 developing countries. In total, 55 Canadian families are among the 450 families working with the ministry worldwide.

## German evangelical leader says 'Allah' is not the God of the Bible

WETZLAR, Germany (EP) — Criticizing efforts to minimize the fundamental differences between Christianity and Islam, Rev. Horst Marquardt, president of the German branch of the Lausanne Committee, told the German news service IDEA that emphasizing the similarities between the two world faiths had led to the "unfortunate misconception" that "Allah and the God of the Bible are one and the same."

Marquardt said Germans are greatly confused in their assessment of Islam. He noted that Islam differs from Christianity in significant ways, including denying the Trinity, denying Christ's resurrection, and denying that Jesus is the Son of God. He noted, however, that Chris-

tians who point out these significant differences are increasingly dismissed as "fundamentalists" by Muslims and Christians alike.

Marquardt said Islam must

bear responsibility for icy relations with evangelicals, noting that Islam has often nursed the image of "the Christian enemy" with "often fatal consequences."

## RBC enrolment up 24 per cent

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. (RBC) — For this fall term, the enrolment at Reformed Bible College in Grand Rapids, Mich., has risen to 245 students from the 1996 total of 198. This is an increase of 24 per cent and sets a new all-time record for RBC.

The number of full-time equivalent (FTE) students this semester is 213, compared to last year's 168 — a 27 per cent increase.

Students in RBC's traditional daytime programs total 209 now as compared to last year's 182, and 36 students are enrolled in the Excel degree completion program, which meets in the evenings. In addition, 53 students are studying by correspondence — courses designed for students who wish this type of study due to distance or time constraints.

## Jewish geologist uses Scripture to search for oil

JERUSALEM (EP) — Over 400 tests by geologists have confirmed the theory that there is no oil in Israel. That doesn't bother oil researcher Tuvia Loskin. His interpretation of a portion of the Book of Deuteronomy tells him that there's "black gold" lurking beneath the Holy Land.

Deut. 33:33-35, says: "May the Lord bless his land with the precious dew from heaven above and with the deep waters that lie below..." Loskin says the latter phrase must mean oil, and some rabbis agree with him.

According to the *General Jewish Weekly*, tests in an area between Jerusalem and Tel Aviv have uncovered traces of oil, and the 46-year-old Loskin is hoping for a breakthrough next year.



## Church

## CRC music/liturgy editor discusses changes, non-negotiables in worship



Dr. Emily Brink

### Robert VanderVennen

TORONTO, Ont. — So you'd like to experience Sunday worship that warms your heart and builds your life. Maybe you need a worship service that blends the traditional with the new, says Dr. Emily Brink in a symposium she is bringing to Christian Reformed congregations in various parts of Canada and the U.S.

Brink, who is editor of the quarterly periodical *Reformed Worship* and is music and liturgy editor of CRC Publications, is engaging church members in discussions about communal worship. Her opening presentation takes its cues from the 111-page book *Authentic Worship in a Changing Culture*, a new CRC publication built around a recent study of worship presented to the annual synod of the church.

### Why so much change?

"Why are there so many changes in worship these days?" she asks, followed by: "What is there in worship that should *not* change?" Some changes are the result of the worldwide ecumenical liturgical movement, she says. Scholars have gone back through the centuries to the very earliest information on worship in the church. John Calvin had done that, too, and we now see a renewed emphasis today on the full, active and conscious participation of the congregation in worship. These changes have been most dramatically clear in Roman Catholic worship today.

Changes in worship have also been brought about by the charismatic movement, said Brink. Renewed emphasis on the Holy Spirit has brought simplicity, repetition and ecstatic

singing, often including hand-clapping and raised hands. Although this adds emotional fervor, Brink said not all of it is good, especially the loss of lament, and the over-simplifying.

Emphasis on evangelistic outreach is another reason for change, with introduction of the "seeker service." Cultural diversity, too, brings change. Each Sunday Christian Reformed worship on North America takes place in 12 different languages, Brink noted. All these changes put Reformed Christians, too, under pressure to make changes in their style of worship.

### Some things must remain

But some things in Reformed worship should not and do not change. The sermon continues its place of importance, being, at best, biblical teaching that moves our hearts and motivates our lives. The vital story of salvation may be told in special ways to children in the service, but the story of God's grace fits us all, as it has always done.

Many churches now have a worship committee and perhaps worship leaders to assist the pastor and involve church members more actively in worship. But pastors present cautioned that volunteers may not always be reliable. There is also the issue that people pitching in may not do a very good job. Training is needed so that all parts of worship will not only be sincere but also be effectively presented.

There was lively discussion among the 60 people who attended the symposium in Toronto, along with new energy to make worship services more deeply meaningful for increasingly diverse congregations.

## The barnyard language of Christmas

"And she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger" (Luke 2:7, NIV).

The expression "barnyard language" is sometimes used to describe the kind of earthy vocabulary which is not considered appropriate in polite society. The euphemistic "BS" refers to a common example of such barnyard language. Depending on one's upbringing and background, people have different sensibilities about different four-letter words. I suspect that almost all readers of *Christian Courier* would avoid using the F-word, but some might occasionally say the S-word, and thereby shock many of their fellow-evangelicals.

The sensibilities of the Bible writers seem to have been different from ours. When Paul says in Ephesians 4:29, "Do not let any unwholesome (literally "rotten") talk come out of your mouths," I doubt whether he had barnyard language in mind. He himself is not afraid to say in Philippians 3:8 that he considered all his attainments in Judaism to be *skubala* — an S-word in Greek which is probably best rendered by the well-known S-word in English.

Similarly, when the prophet Zechariah describes the "filthy" clothes of the High Priest Joshua in Zechariah 3:3-4, the adjective he uses is literally "shitty." Sometimes we need to be reminded of the earthiness of biblical language, which can too easily be glossed over by the elegance and niceness of our contemporary translations.

### No soft, clean bed

Another case in point is the manger of the Christmas story. I don't know whether the word "manger" is still in common use on farms today, but it is certainly not part of the everyday vocabulary of most people in Canada. I suspect that 90 per cent of Canadians associate the word "manger" only with the Christmas story, especially as romanticized by Christmas carols and Christmas cards. They have a vague idea that it is like a little bed that a baby can sleep in.

But the English word "manger" (like the Greek word *phatne* which it translates in Luke 2:7) properly refers to a "feeding trough" — a rough-hewn, dirty container of animal feed. There is nothing romantic about it. "Manger," before it was sanitized by cards and carols, belonged quite literally to the "barnyard language" which the Bible speaks. Bible translators, if they really want to call a spade a spade, should speak straightforwardly of the "feeding trough" (Dutch *voerbak*) into which

## Chapter & Verse



Wayne Brouwer  
Andrew Kuyvenhoven  
Laura Smit  
Al Wolters



the baby Jesus was laid.

The English word "crib" has a similar history, and also attests to the powerful impact of the Christmas story on the English language. We think of a crib as a cute little bed for babies, but originally it, too, referred to a feeding trough. Its association with the Christmas story gradually caused it to have its present meaning.

Consequently, the words of the well-known Christmas carol, "Away in a manger, no crib for a bed," are very ironic, since "manger" and "crib" were originally synonyms. It is precisely because Jesus lay in a manger that he *did* have



"We think of a crib as a cute little bed for babies, but originally it referred to a feeding trough."

a crib for a bed. There seems to be an inbuilt tendency in the English language to soften the harshness of Jesus' first resting place.

### About humiliation

The matter is not without significance. Christmas is about the incarnation, the central event of the biblical story, and the incarnation is about *humiliation*. God himself was put in a feeding trough, in a place that was no stranger to the slop and spit of farm animals. From his birth to his death, Jesus was familiar with the earthiness and degradation of human life. He entered our condition, for our sakes. We can thank God for the barnyard language of the Christmas story.

Al Wolters teaches Bible and Greek at Redeemer College Ancaster, Ont. He wishes all his readers a good Christmas season.





The Staff and National Board of the Christian Labour Association of Canada wish all friends and members a blessed Christmas and peace and happiness throughout the coming year.



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The residents of Shalom Manor, a Christian Long Term Care Facility in Grimsby, Ont., convey to their loved ones and friends, at this blessed Christmas Season and throughout the New Year 1998 the following message:

*May Jesus, our Savior,  
Who was born on Christmas Day,  
Bless you at this season  
In a very special way.  
May the beauty and the promise  
Of that silent, holy night  
Fill your heart with peace and happiness  
And make your new year bright!*

Helen Steiner Rice

The following residents of Shalom Manor have requested that their names be included into the 1997 Christmas Greeting edition of *Christian Courier*.

Mrs. Wieke Veenstra  
Mrs. Renske Draaistra  
Mrs. Tine de Haan  
Mr. Henry and Mrs. Johanna Winter  
Mr. Daniel and Mrs. Cornelia van der Steen  
Mr. George Neven  
Mr. Wilfred and Mrs. Christine Sjaarda  
Mr. Henry and Mrs. Audrey Vegter  
Mrs. Janke (Jane) Soldaat  
Mrs. Hilda Gerritsen  
Mrs. Annie van de Zande  
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Mr. Jan and Mrs. Minnie Timmer  
Mr. Jurjen and Mrs. Junenna Hartman  
Mrs. Greta Bergman  
Mrs. Maaikje Bremer  
Mrs. Aaltje Oegema

Mrs. Annie Bokma  
Mrs. Dee Broer  
Mr. Koop Baptist  
Mrs. Aukien Zeyl  
Mrs. Grietje van der Leek  
Mrs. Ina Tolsma  
Mr. Koos (Jake) Kneigt  
Mrs. Uilkje de Vries  
Mr. Barteld Kronemeyer  
Mr. Peter and Mrs. Karen Baarda  
Mrs. Willemijntje Uitbeyerse  
Mrs. Jacqueline Noordzij  
Mrs. Tina van Amerongen  
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Mrs. Bep Westeyn  
Mrs. Wilma van Breemen-van Delt  
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Mr. Louis and Mrs. Renske Dam  
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If you wish a photo included, send us the original.</p> <p>d) <i>Christian Courier</i> will not be responsible for any errors due to handwritten or phoned-in advertisements.</p> <p>e) The rate shown above for classifieds covers any length up to five column inches. <i>Christian Courier</i> reserves the right to charge for additional column inches at the rate of \$15.00 per column inch (GST incl.).</p> <p><b>NEWLYWEDS &amp; NEW PARENTS</b></p> <p>We offer a one-year subscription for only \$25.00 (GST incl.) to the couples whose wedding is announced in the <i>Christian Courier</i> and to the parents of the child whose birth announcement appears in our paper. To facilitate matters, we encourage those who request the wedding or birth announcement to enclose \$25.00 and the couple's correct address.</p> <p><b>Christian Courier</b> 4-261 Martindale Rd. St. Catharines, ON L2W 1A1 Phone: (905) 682-8311 Fax: (905) 682-8313</p>	<p><b>BOWMAN:</b></p>  <p><i>Heather Elizabeth</i></p> <p>Eric and Kimberly (nee Donnelly) give thanks to God for the safe arrival of</p> <p><b>HEATHER ELIZABETH</b></p> <p>on Nov. 18, 1997, weighing 7 lbs., 10 oz.</p> <p>A sister for Samantha. Proud grandparents are Grace Bowman and Harry Bowman of St. Catharines, Ont., and Wayne and Dorothy Donnelly of Orangeville, Ont.</p> <p>Address: 105 Albert St., St. Catharines, ON L2R 2H4</p>	<p>1957 December 11 1997</p> <p>"I know where you live," (Rev. 2:13a).</p> <p>It is with joy in our hearts and thankfulness to the Lord that we announce the 40th wedding anniversary of our parents</p> <p><b>BERT and DINI HAAR</b> (nee HARTMAN)</p> <p>We thank God for the faithfulness shown to them throughout these years. It is our prayer that the Lord will continue to guide and bless them in the years to come. Congratulations from their children and grandchildren:</p> <p>Wilma &amp; Martin DeRuyter—Smithers, B.C.</p> <p>Melanie, Valerie</p> <p>Martin &amp; Rose Haar—Smithers, B.C.</p> <p>Kimberly Foley, Ashley, Christopher, Michelle, Michael</p> <p>Ed &amp; Debbie Haar—Smithers, B.C.</p> <p>Kiana</p> <p>Bert &amp; Anna Haar—Houston, B.C.</p> <p>Marian &amp; Kevin DeBree—Lacombe, Alta.</p> <p>Samantha, Alexandra</p> <p>Home address: Box 923, Smithers, BC V0J 2N0</p>	<p>1952 December 7 1997</p> <p>"Unless the Lord builds the house, its builders labor in vain" (Ps. 127:1a).</p> <p><b>WIEGER (BILL) and JOHANNA</b> (JOOP) <b>STELPSTRA</b> (nee RENKEMA)</p> <p>Our Mom and Dad, known as Omi and Opi to the grandkids, have been blessed with 45 years of marriage! We, too, have been blessed and look forward to celebrating together with family and friends.</p> <p>We hope and pray, Mom and Dad, that you will enjoy many more years together!</p> <p>With love, your children and grandchildren:</p> <p>David &amp; Nancy Stelpstra—Simcoe</p> <p>Joel, Cameron</p> <p>Ted &amp; Sara Stelpstra—Samia</p> <p>Brittney, Jordan, Dylan</p> <p>Robert Stelpstra—Quebec City</p> <p>Nelinda (Lynne) &amp; Ed Vandenberg—Houston, B.C.</p> <p>Lauren, Taylor</p> <p>An open house will be held in Mom and Dad's honor, D.V., on Saturday, Dec. 27, 1997, from 2-4 p.m., at Parkview Meadows, 72 Townsend Dr., Townsend, Ont. Best wishes only, please!</p> <p>Address: 57 Charlton Cres., Simcoe, ON N3Y 1A8. Phone: (519) 426-1687.</p>	<p>Nieuwe Niedorp Guelph the Neth. Ont.</p> <p>1947 December 18 1997</p> <p>"This is the Lord's doing; it is marvelous in our eyes" (Ps. 118:23).</p> <p>It is with joy and thanksgiving to our loving God that we are able to celebrate the 50th anniversary of our parents, grandparents, and great-grandparents</p> <p><b>JACOB and JOHANNA</b> <b>THALEN</b></p> <p>We celebrate with you and rejoice in the example you have set, the good memories you have given us, and the love you share. Love and congratulations from your children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren.</p> <p>Harry &amp; Jenny Thalen—Guelph, Ont.</p> <p>Trevor, Alan, Rachel, Phoenix, Natasha</p> <p>Frank &amp; Nell Bergman—Woodstock, Ont.</p> <p>Terry, Anne, Derek, Erin, Jason, Julie, Dennis, Clinton</p> <p>Eric &amp; Elizabeth Thalen—Coquitlam, B.C.</p> <p>Aeronn, Nicole</p> <p>Jack &amp; Jennifer Thalen—Abbotsford, B.C.</p> <p>Joel, Jocelyn, Ashley</p> <p>John &amp; Hilda VanGysel—Drayton, Ont.</p> <p>Matthew, Jeff</p> <p>Bruce &amp; Joanne Adema—The Philippines</p> <p>Rebecca, Justin, Seth, Chara</p> <p>You are welcome to congratulate them at an open house on Saturday, Dec. 27, 1997, in the First Chr. Ref. Church, 287 Water St., Guelph, Ont., from 2-4 p.m.</p> <p>Home address is: 82 Cedar St., Guelph, ON N1G 1C5</p>
	<p><b>Anniversaries</b></p> <p>Koekange Strathroy the Neth. Ont.</p> <p>1952 December 19 1997</p> <p>"Seek the Lord and His strength, seek His presence continually" (1 Chron. 16:11).</p> <p>With thankfulness to the Lord we are happy to announce, D.V., the 45th anniversary of our parents and grandparents</p> <p><b>HILBERT and HENNY</b> <b>DE ROO</b> (nee STEENBERGEN)</p> <p>Mary &amp; Jack—Prince George, B.C.</p> <p>Laura, Adam</p> <p>Tilda &amp; Syd—St. Thomas, Ont.</p> <p>Alyssa, Terry, Jonathan, Erika</p> <p>Jim &amp; Reine—Kitchener, Ont.</p> <p>Brad, Brian, Sarah</p> <p>Harry &amp; Elaine—North Bay, Ont.</p> <p>Judy &amp; Greg—Aniak, Alaska</p> <p>Ron &amp; Sonja—London, Ont.</p> <p>Linda—Strathroy, Ont.</p> <p>Paula—Strathroy, Ont.</p> <p>You are invited to an open house in their honor on Saturday, Dec. 20, 1997, from 2-4 p.m., at the East Christian Reformed Church, 476 Metcalfe Street East, Strathroy, Ont.</p> <p>Home address: 178 Southfield Drive, Strathroy, ON N7G 3V4</p>	<p><b>Marriages</b></p> <p><b>WETMORE/DE JONG:</b></p>  <p>Congratulations to Paul and Nycole on their upcoming wedding!</p> <p>Stan and Corrie de Jong of St. Catharines, Ont., are pleased to announce the upcoming wedding of their son</p> <p><b>PAUL GERARD</b> to <b>NYCOLE LORRAINE</b></p> <p>daughter of Blair and Linda Wetmore of Calgary, Alta.</p> <p>The celebration of this special event will take place, the Lord willing, on Saturday, Dec. 27, 1997, at 4 p.m., at The Wedding Pavilion, 10817 West Valley Rd., S.W., Calgary, Alta.</p> <p>Address: c/o 224, 3715-51 St. S.W., Calgary, AB T3E 6V2</p>	 <p>Westerbork Smithville the Neth. Ont.</p> <p>1952 December 4 1997</p> <p>"Where does my help come from? My help comes from the Lord" (Ps. 121:1b,2a).</p> <p>Today we give thanks to the Lord for our parents, grandparents and great-grandparents</p> <p><b>GEORGE and FRANCES VOS</b> (nee ZWAAGSTRA)</p> <p>who are celebrating 45 years of marriage. With love from all of us.</p> <p>Art &amp; Tina Vos—St. Ann's, Ont.</p> <p>Michelle &amp; Alex (Amber), Sherry &amp; Rick (Benjamin), Amanda, Gernt Jane &amp; Adnan Vanderwier—Smithville, Ont.</p> <p>Leona, Hugh, Gayle, Gernt, Richard, John, David</p> <p>Wilma &amp; Ron Acaster—Fenwick, Ont.</p> <p>Natasha, Trina (Tiyanna), Jacob, Jordan</p> <p>Lloyd &amp; Glenda Vos—Smithville, Ont.</p> <p>Melissa</p> <p>George &amp; Sharon Vos—Smithville, Ont.</p> <p>Jacqueline, Julie, Christina</p> <p>Paul &amp; Ingrid Vos—Smithville, Ont.</p> <p>Ruby, Nicole, Kern, Tyler</p> <p>John &amp; Nancy Vos—Smithville, Ont.</p> <p>Jennifer Vos—Smithville, Ont.</p> <p>Congratulations Dad and Mom.</p> <p>Address: 72 Wade Rd., Smithville, ON L0R 2A0</p>	<p><b>Obituaries</b></p> <p>Zunderdorp St. Catharines the Neth. Ont.</p> <p>May 24, 1917 - Nov. 15, 1997</p> <p>"We have this hope as an anchor of the soul, firm and secure" (Hebrews 6:19)</p> <p>The Lord in his infinite wisdom has taken home his child</p> <p><b>CORNELIS (COR) LOF</b></p> <p>In the last few years, he had to give up his earthly riches as he weakened physically, but God has now given him his riches. He has been given the crown of life.</p> <p>Loving husband of 56 years of Gré (Margaret).</p> <p>Dear father of:</p> <p>Elizabeth &amp; Henk Nienhuis—Victoria, B.C.</p> <p>Reny &amp; Jim Korf—Grand Rapids, Mich.</p> <p>Dick († 1989) &amp; Linda Lof—Almere, the Neth.</p> <p>Gerald &amp; Hama Lof—St. Catharines, Ont.</p> <p>Robert &amp; Zee Lof—Toronto, Ont.</p> <p>Fred &amp; Nelly Lof—Beamsville, Ont.</p> <p>Loving grandfather of 18 and great-grandfather of eight</p> <p>Correspondence address: Mrs. Margaret (Gré) Lof, 19 Harcove St., St. Catharines, ON L2N 1W7</p>
	<p><b>Births</b></p> <p><b>BERGSMA:</b></p> <p>Jeff and Sara are pleased to announce the birth of their daughter</p> <p><b>VICTORIA KATELYN</b></p> <p>6 lbs., 11 oz., at Milton District Hospital on Monday, Nov. 17, 1997, at 11:42 p.m.</p> <p>Praise the Lord. Our miracle of life is magnificent! What a joy! Proud great-grandmother is Eleanor Fendley; proud grandmother Bonnie Martin and grandparents George and Shirley Bergsma</p> <p>Home address: 36 Raylawn Cres., Georgetown, ON L7G 4M8</p>	<p><b>For Rent</b></p> <p><b>Cottage for rent</b></p> <p>in scenic <b>Holten</b> (Holland).</p> <p>Contact: <b>Andy Borger</b> (905) 623-6049.</p>		



## Classifieds

Obituaries	Job Opportunities	Job Opportunities
<p>Daarlerveen the Neth. 1905 - 1997</p> <p>"I am the resurrection and the Life. He who believes in me will live even though he dies, and whoever lives and believes in me will never die" (John 11:25,26).</p> <p>On Nov. 14, 1997, in her 93rd year of life the Lord took home our dear mother, grandmother and great-grandmother</p> <p><b>HENDRIKJE (HENNIE) KAMPMAN</b></p> <p>She was predeceased by her husband Albert Jan Kampman, her daughter-in-law Alice Kampman (Bruinsma) and granddaughter Judith Van Donkersgoed. She is survived by her loving family: Jan Kampman Hennie (Wiebe) Wagenaar Albert (Anne) Kampman Bill (Corrie) Kampman Leo (Alison) Kampman Hank Kampman John (Teresa) Kampman Leida (Herman) Jansen Gert (Bill) Wikkenink Ria (Wilt) Van Donkersgoed Marten (Maria) Kampman</p> <p>Also 47 grandchildren, 60 great-grandchildren, and also one sister, Martha, in the Netherlands.</p> <p>The funeral took place on Nov. 19, 1997, with Pastor Bert Slofstra officiating.</p> <p>Jan. 10, 1929 - Nov. 9, 1997</p> <p>We were saddened when we received the news of the sudden death of our dear brother, brother-in-law and uncle</p> <p><b>WIEBE VANDERGAAST</b></p> <p>Retired long time custodian of Knox Christian School.</p> <p>We will remember him as always being cheerful and busy and how he was always ready and willing to use his skills for others.</p> <p>We will miss him and mourn our loss but we are thankful for his gain.</p> <p>May the Lord surround our sister-in-law Hotty and her family with His comforting presence.</p> <p>Corry &amp; Jelle Abma (†Gerrit, 1972) — Bowmanville</p> <p>Henk &amp; Ans — Heerenveen, the Neth.</p> <p>Albert &amp; Trix — Bowmanville</p> <p>Jacob &amp; Johanna — Orono</p> <p>Jelle &amp; Helen — Bowmanville</p> <p>Froukje Mulder († Andy, 1987) — Bowmanville</p> <p>Thys &amp; Annie — Whitby</p> <p>Hammy († Anne, 1991) — Bowmanville</p> <p>nieces and nephews.</p>	<p><b>Holland Christian Homes Inc.</b></p> <p>is seeking applicants for the following positions:</p> <p><b>Bookkeeper/Accountant Maintenance Supervisor Admissions Co-ordinator Secretarial Support</b></p> <p>Also from time to time we need to fill vacant R.P.N., R.N. and H.C.A. positions. Please apply to:</p> <p><b>Holland Christian Homes</b> 7900 McLaughlin Rd. S., Brampton, ON L6Y 5A7 Fax: (905) 459-8667</p> <p><b>DEJONG ENTERPRISES INC.</b></p> <p>Cross Border Transportation, Direct Marketing and Distribution Specialists</p> <p><b>Local and Long Haul AZ Drivers</b></p> <p>De Jong Enterprises Inc. is currently looking to hire drivers with valid AZ licenses.</p> <p><b>What we provide:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A consistently scheduled route</li> <li>• Consistently assigned late model, satellite equipped unit</li> <li>• Home on all weekends</li> <li>• Competitive pay &amp; benefits</li> <li>• Maximum work year round</li> <li>• Incentive pay</li> <li>• Job security</li> </ul> <p><b>What we require:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An acceptable abstract</li> <li>• Border crossing ability</li> <li>• 2 years of experience</li> <li>• Professional attitude</li> </ul> <p>Please send current resume and abstract, quoting Job DR1115</p> <p><b>Fleet Mechanic</b></p> <p>An opportunity is available for a Truck Fleet Mechanic to be responsible for all repairs, inspections and ordering of our Company Trucks.</p> <p>Candidates must possess a Class A Diesel Mechanic license and a valid AZ Driver's license, 2 or more years of truck repair experience. This position requires strict adherence to preventative maintenance schedules, safety inspections and time schedules.</p> <p>This position offers a competitive salary and full benefits package. Please send current resume quoting Job TR0501</p> <p><b>Accounts Receivable Clerk</b></p> <p>De Jong Enterprises Inc. is also looking for an energetic and dynamic individual to join our Accounting team for the responsibility of Accounts Receivable Management.</p> <p>We require an enthusiastic, organized and particular employee to manage our Accounts Receivable. Applicants should have either 2 years clerical experience or applicable Business education. Experience in Collections, ACCPAC and Customer Service will be an asset.</p> <p>This position offers a competitive salary and full benefits package. Please send current resume quoting Job OF1201</p> <p><b>De Jong Enterprises Inc.</b> P.O. Box 39, Norwich, ON N0J 1P0 or fax to (519) 424-2399 No phone calls please.</p>	<p><b>Ministry Co-ordinator</b></p> <p>The Clarkson Christian Reformed Church in Mississauga, Ont., has an opening on its pastoral staff for an enthusiastic and qualified person to lead and develop an effective ministry to youth and young adults as well as the enhancement of our congregational life activities.</p> <p>For more specific information, please write or fax no later than <b>January 15, 1998</b>, to:</p> <p><b>Clarkson Christian Reformed Church</b> 1880 Lakeshore Rd. W., Mississauga, ON L5J 1J7 Fax: (905) 823-5841 Attention: Search Committee</p> <p><b>Join The Alliance Team!!</b></p> <p>Due to the retirement of a staff member and the expansion of services to our member schools, the Ontario Alliance of Christian Schools invites applications for the following positions:</p> <p><b>EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT</b> The required skills and experience include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* database planning and development; <i>Microsoft Access</i>;</li> <li>* organizational management, scheduling, and communication;</li> <li>* responsibilities directly supporting the Executive Director.</li> </ul> <p><b>INTERNET CO-ORDINATOR</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* knowledge and skills about website maintenance and development;</li> <li>* intranet structures and functions;</li> <li>* experience with electronic communication.</li> </ul> <p><b>PUBLICATIONS ASSISTANT</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* proofreading, editing, reformatting and general enhancement of OACS;</li> <li>* curriculum documents;</li> <li>* familiarity with <i>Windows 95</i>, <i>WordPerfect</i>;</li> <li>* desktop publishing skills are required.</li> </ul> <p>Full/part-time combinations will be considered. For further information call (905) 648-2100.</p> <p>The deadline for applications is <b>Dec. 15, 1997</b>. All applications should be in the form of a letter with appropriate accompanying support materials and documentation. Please send to:</p> <p><b>Dr. Adrian Guldemond, Executive Director</b> Ontario Alliance of Christian Schools 617 Highway 53 East Ancaster, ON L9G 3K9 E-mail: <a href="mailto:ag@aocs.org">ag@aocs.org</a> Internet: <a href="http://www.oacs.org">www.oacs.org</a></p> <p></p>
<p><b>Christmas Greetings</b></p> <p><b>VAN MARRUM:</b></p> <p>To all my children, grandchildren and friends: A merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.</p> <p>Gerlof Van Marrum 143 Rock St., Smithville, ON L0R 2A0</p>		<p><b>Miscellaneous</b></p> <p><b>An important message from Redeemer College</b></p> <p>Your support is needed in order to help students receive a quality university education from a Reformed perspective. Due to the Canada Post mail strike our year-end appeal has not yet reached the homes of our supporters. We would like to encourage you to make your year-end gift today through Visa or Mastercard, at your local branch of the Bank of Nova Scotia or through our web site <a href="http://www.redeemer.on.ca">www.redeemer.on.ca</a>. Call the College today and we will accept your donation by phone or give you the information needed to make your donation through the bank. Thank you for supporting higher Christian education!</p>



## Classifieds

Teachers	Anniversaries	Miscellaneous	Job Opportunities
<p><b>KITCHENER, Ont.:</b> Laurentian Hills Chr. School invites applications for a maternity leave situation during the 1997/98 school year. A <b>full-time Grade 2 classroom teacher position</b> for all subjects including French. This position to commence early to mid-February. Interested parties may reply with C.V. to:</p> <p><b>Mr. Luke Janssen, Principal</b> Laurentian Hills Chr. School 11 Laurentian Dr. Kitchener, ON N2E 1C1</p> <p><b>OAKVILLE, Ont.:</b> John Knox Chr. School requires an experienced <b>junior and senior Kindergarten teacher</b> due to a maternity leave, starting in March 1998. Letters of application and resumes will be accepted until 3 p.m., Dec. 19, 1997.</p> <p><b>Mrs. L. Keith, Principal</b> John Knox Chr. School 2232 Sheridan Garden Dr. Oakville, ON L6J 7T1 Fax: (905) 829-8056</p>	 <p>1938      January 1      1998</p> <p>With thanks to God we wish to announce the <b>60th wedding anniversary</b> of our parents</p> <p><b>ANNE and TINE DE BOER</b> (nee KOK)</p> <p>John &amp; Nell — Toronto Betsy — Mississauga Bruce &amp; Christine — London Gerrit &amp; Nancy — Pottageville Theo &amp; Mary — Kitchener Margret &amp; Harry — Toronto and grandchildren and great-grandchildren.</p> <p>You are invited to an open house at Holland Christian Homes in Brampton, Ont., on Saturday, Jan. 3, 1998, D.V., between 2-4 p.m. Best wishes only. Home address: 7900 McLaughlin Road S., #1302, Brampton, ON L6Y 5A7</p>	<p><b>DORDT COLLEGE</b></p> <p><b>REGISTRAR</b></p> <p>The position is vacant as the result of the tragic death of Douglas M. Eckardt. Responsibilities include such areas as academic advising; planning, organizing, and managing a computer-based information system for student registration and records.</p> <p><b>Qualifications:</b> Candidates with a graduate degree and experience in academia as faculty or administrator are preferred. Position available as early as January 1. Actual beginning date is flexible. To receive application materials, qualified persons committed to a Reformed, biblical perspective and educational philosophy are encouraged to send a curriculum vitae and a letter of interest which provides evidence of that commitment to:</p> <p><b>Dr. Rockne McCarthy</b> Dordt College 498 4th Ave. NE Sioux Center, IA 51250-1697 facsimile: 712-722-4496 e-mail: vpaa@dordt.edu</p> <p><i>Dordt College is an equal opportunity institution and strongly encourages applications from women, minorities, and disabled persons.</i></p>	<p><b>REDEEMER COLLEGE</b></p> <p><b>FACULTY POSITION</b></p> <p>Redeemer College invites applications for a sessional or tenure-track position in:</p> <p><b>MATHEMATICS / COMPUTER SCIENCE</b></p> <p>to teach a combination of courses in introductory mathematics and computer science.</p> <p>Candidates should be committed to teaching and pursuing scholarship from a Reformed Christian perspective, and should possess a doctoral degree in mathematics or computer science. The position begins August 1, 1998 (subject to budgetary and board approval). Deadline: February 15, 1998 or until filled. Direct inquiries and applications to:</p> <p><i>Dr. M. Elaine Botha, Vice-President (Academic), Redeemer College, 777 Garner Rd. E., Ancaster, ON L9K 1J4.</i></p> <p>Redeemer College offers equal employment opportunities to qualified applicants. In accordance with Canadian Immigration requirements, this advertisement is directed to Canadian citizens and permanent residents.</p> <p>A CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY-LEVEL COLLEGE OFFERING FULL DEGREE PROGRAMS.</p>
<p><b>For Rent</b></p> <p>For rent: Apartment in St. Catharines, Ont. One bedroom basement. Bright, spacious and newly renovated. Fridge, stove, utilities incl. \$350 a month. First and last. Call (905) 682-2912 (after 6 p.m.).</p>	<p><b>DORDT COLLEGE</b></p> <p><b>Director of Institutional Research and Planning</b></p> <p>The successful candidate for this new position will serve as a professional staff assistant to the President of the College. Responsibilities include analyzing educational, demographic and social trends; developing initiatives in response to changes in the educational and social environment; monitoring campus diversity; co-ordinating studies for institutional accreditation. Qualifications: a graduate degree and experience as faculty in higher education or as administrator in higher or secondary education.</p> <p>Review of candidates will begin January 5, 1998.</p> <p>To receive application materials and a detailed job description, qualified persons committed to a Reformed biblical perspective and educational philosophy are encouraged to send a resume and a letter of interest which provides evidence of that commitment to:</p> <p><b>Office of the President</b> Dordt College 498 4th Ave. NE Sioux Center, IA 51250 facsimile: 712-722-1185 e-mail: nancyvb@dordt.edu</p> <p><i>Dordt College is an equal opportunity institution and encourages the nominations and candidacies of women and minorities.</i></p>	<p><b>ONE TO ANOTHER</b></p> <p>Christian companion magazine. Hundreds of readers Canada-wide. Single issue \$5.</p> <p><b>Write to:</b> #12 923 2nd Ave. S. Lethbridge, AB T1J 0C7</p>	<p><b>INSTITUTE FOR CHRISTIAN STUDIES</b></p> <p>ICS is seeking to fill a vacancy in</p> <p><b>Political Philosophy</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Women candidates are particularly encouraged to apply.</li> <li>• Applicants should possess a PhD in this field and should subscribe to the Christian basis of the Institute.</li> <li>• Responsibilities include teaching master's level courses and engaging in a program of academic research and publishing.</li> <li>• Starting salary is approximately \$40,000 + benefits.</li> <li>• In accordance with Canadian immigration laws, this advertisement is directed to Canadian citizens and permanent residents.</li> </ul> <p>Qualified candidates should send:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- a letter of application</li> <li>- Curriculum Vitae</li> <li>- names of three references</li> </ul> <p><b>To: Dr. Hendrik Hart, Academic Dean</b> Deadline: February 28, 1998</p>
<p><b>CLINTON, ONTARIO ADULT LIFE LEASE RESIDENCES</b></p> <p>available, 936 sq.ft. to 1235 sq.ft. Fully wheelchair accessible, sprinkler system, central air, security throughout building. Dutch and English spoken. For more info. call</p> <p>(519) 233-7296 or (519) 482-7862.</p>		<p><b>The Dutch Market</b></p> <p>544 Queen St., Chatham, Ont. Phone: (519) 352-2831 Fax: (519) 352-6533</p> <p><b>Specializing in:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gouda Cheeses &amp; Deli Meats</li> <li>• Imported Chocolate &amp; Licorice</li> <li>• Soups &amp; Indonesian Foods</li> <li>• Cookies &amp; Cakes</li> <li>• Delft Blue Giftware</li> </ul> <p>Bringing a World of Fine Products to Your Neighborhood!</p> <p><b>Visit us at</b> <a href="http://www.dutchmarket.com">www.dutchmarket.com</a></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recipes • Contests</li> <li>• Kids' Gallery</li> <li>• History of Sinterklaas</li> <li>• and more...</li> </ul>	<p><b>ICS</b></p> <p>229 College St. Toronto, ON M5T 1R4</p> <p>Tel. 416-979-2331 Fax 416-979-2332 <a href="http://icscanada.edu">http://icscanada.edu</a></p>
<p><b>Job Opportunities</b></p> <p><b>DE HAAN MOVERS</b> requires helpers, full- and part-time. "D" license an asset, but not required. Hamilton, Ont. Phone (905) 574-8611 or fax (905) 679-4744.</p>			<p><b>DORDT COLLEGE</b></p> <p><b>Faculty Positions</b></p> <p>Dordt College is seeking Christian academicians for openings beginning August 1998 in the following areas:</p> <p><b>Business Administration:</b> marketing and management</p> <p><b>History:</b> Western civilization, introductory and upper level European, and introductory non-Western history.</p> <p><b>Mathematics:</b> introductory and upper level</p> <p><b>Music:</b> choir, music history, general education arts course (one-year position)</p> <p><b>Theology:</b> general education courses in biblical theology, upper level courses in biblical studies, missions, and Greek.</p> <p>To receive application materials, qualified persons committed to a Reformed, biblical perspective and educational philosophy are encouraged to send a letter of interest that provides evidence of that commitment and a curriculum vitae to</p> <p><b>Dr. Rockne McCarthy, Dordt College, 498 4th Ave. NE, Sioux Center, IA 51250;</b> facsimile: 712-722-4496; e-mail: vpaa@dordt.edu</p> <p><i>Dordt College is an equal opportunity institution and encourages the nominations and candidacies of women and minorities.</i></p>
<p><b>For Sale</b></p> <p><b>SJOELBAKKEN</b></p> <p>Dutch Shuffleboards, hardwood, heavy duty. \$135, shipping, taxes incl., Can. &amp; U.S.A.</p> <p><b>D. &amp; J. Koomans</b> R.R. #3, Chatham, ON N7M 5J3 (519) 351-7667</p>			



DECEMBER 5, 1997

## Classifieds

Miscellaneous	Events	Miscellaneous
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## "KOMT ALLEN TEZAMEN"

Join us with many guest artists for a Dutch Christmas evening of song and praise at **Redeemer College**, Ancaster, Ont., on **Dec. 13, 1997, at 7:30 p.m.**

**Organists:** Fred Deys and Hans Schouls

**String quartet:** Erin, Ben, Brittany and Brielle Goheen

**Solos:** Karin Boonstra and Dick DeKleine

**Choir:** "Adoramus/Maranatha"

**Reader:** Mary Ann Wunsche

**Meditation:** Rev. H.R. DeBolster

(Freewill offering for Redeemer College)

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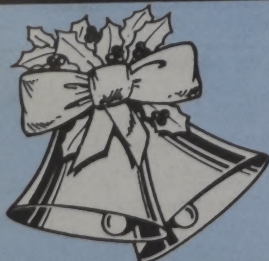
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## Calendar of Events

Please submit only brief items. Placement is subject to space availability. Lengthy, multiple-event announcements will be rejected. We reserve the right to edit the material and to charge a nominal, per issue fee per item inserted.



**Dec. 4-6** The RC Theatre Arts Dept. presents its fall mainstage production of "Scrooge... and other Yuletide Yarns," directed by Kip Edinborough Longstaff. At Redeemer College, Ancaster, Ont. **Dec. 4-5:** 7:30 p.m.; **Dec. 6:** 2 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. Info./tickets: (905) 648-2131.

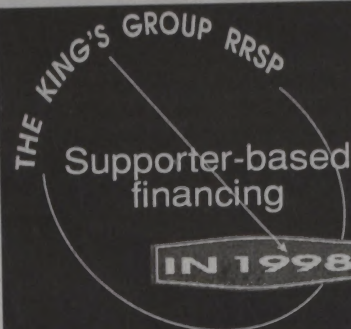
**Dec. 7** "Nederlandse Kerstzangdienst," 7:30 p.m., Emmanuel Ref. Church, 170 Clarke St. N., Woodstock, Ont. Youth service will be held Dec. 14, 7:30 p.m. Info.: (519) 537-6422 (#)

**Dec. 13** Christmas carol-sing-along concert, St. Thomas & District Male Choir, with Rick Dykstra (organ), Ray Tuinhof (trumpet) and Lisa Baxter (soprano). At 7:30 p.m., Knox Presb. Church, St. Thomas, Ont. Freewill offering.

**Dec. 13** Dutch Christmas evening of song and praise with many guest artists, 7:30 p.m., Redeemer College, Ancaster, Ont. Info.: (905) 304-1614 (#)

**Dec. 13-20** Christmas concert series by the Ont. Music Assembly (Leendert Kooij, director), with Andre Knevel at the organ. **Dec. 13:** Melrose United Church, Hamilton, Ont.; **Dec. 17:** Maranatha CRC, Bowmanville, Ont.; **Dec. 20:** Willowdale United Church, Willowdale, Ont. Info.: (905) 775-2230.

**Dec. 14** Dutch worship service led by Rev. J. Groen, 3 p.m., CRC, Ancaster, Ont.



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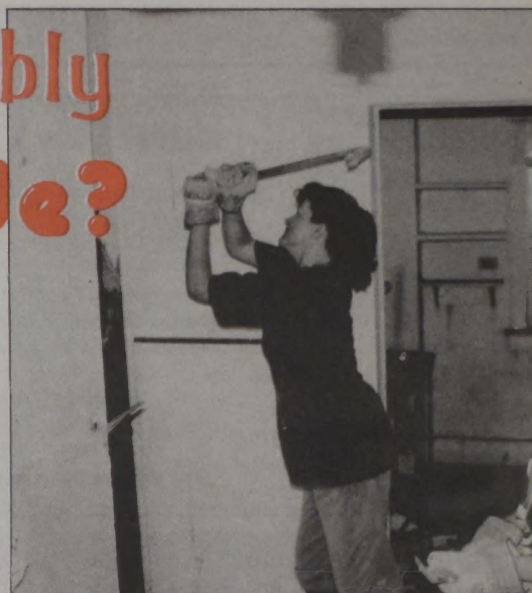
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# How can we possibly thank a multitude?

More than 200 men and women, young and old, converged on the Red River south of Winnipeg this summer and fall to respond to a need. They came to rebuild homes and, thereby, to help rebuild lives.

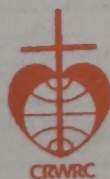


## Thank you to all those who volunteered in Winnipeg:

Nathaniel Martin, Jennifer Elsinga, Leah Martin, Henry Visscher, Angeline Visscher, James Ross, Christine Smit, Pamela Vos, Carolyn DeHaan, Mike VanGalen, Mark Rodermond, Steve Van Hell, Dick Lyzenga, Danielle Koster, Shane McEwen, Ralph Terpstra, Henry Contant, Michelle Gritter, Troy Langelaar, Kelly Bangma, Michelle Contant, Julia Koning, Melanie Olthuis, Dan Ouwehand, Chris Broesma, Diane Regnerus, Janny VanOorsprong, Grace Doelman, Amanda Ennis, Carolyn Looper, Rachel Cools, Danielle Sinke, Minke Kraak, Erica Schipper, Karen Zekveld, Roland Buteyn, Rose Smith, Ed Smith, Pete Kazemier, Ann Kazemier, Bob Hubers, Bud Hubers, John Rozeveld, Millie Rozeveld, Bill and Bertha Hoekstra, Sieger Klooststra, Pete and Eleanor Both, Bill and Ruby Leistra, Bernice Hubers, Mike Fennema, Ken Glasbergen, Mel Klazinga, Marty Rietsma, Matt Eggink, Mike VanderZwaag, Tammy Heidbuurt, Trienke Kaddouri, Cecil Haagsma, John Donker, Jennie Donker, Albert Horneman, Chris Kuipers, Bradley Goodreau, Andy Verhulst, Heather Sandaj, Linda Nydam, Rachel DeVos, Melanie Yzerman, Jerry Arkema, Jodi Fluit, Mike Byma, Simone Bakker, Heidi Elgersma, Dirk DeBoer, Lenard Bakelaar, Rynie Bakelaar, Homer Lensink, Adrian Kloet, Sarah Schaafsma, John Regeling, Chris Mantel, Ralph Hart, Wes Eggink, Ken Tigchelaar, Alex Tigchelaar, Sharon Stam, Jeremy Buesink, Dave DeJonge, Donna Eggink, Tracy Adema, Henk VanHarten, Jason Mantel, Annette Stegenga, Martin Reitsma, Richard Greidanus, Drew Neven, Mike Vanderzwaag, Paul diVincenzo, Graham Boswell, Daniel Abramovich, Jack Verboon, Andrew VanHaelen, Rene Dam, Jack VanderVeen, Jamie Andree, Dave Groen, Wally Boonstra, John Kroeze, Linda Fluit, Henry Smees, Ben VanderWillik, David TeBokkel, LloydWierenga, DavidWagenaar, Kevin Verhoef, ScottVanderwal, Ian Venema, Melle Zwaagstra, Mark Farr, Richard Beldman, Tina Van Tuyl, Paul Fluit, Christina Kuipery, Jennifer Breukelman,

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Sherri Mulder, George Oost, John Wikkerink, Fred Zandberg, David Kapteyn, Susanne Guillaume, Dirk Couperus, Stephen Dykstra, Stephen Hiemstra, Richard Kamminga, Kristi Piersma, Herman Kamink, Glen Snook, Peter Timan, Sylvia DeVries, Gordon Page, George Kollaard, Carol Kollaard, Thomas Kollard, Carl Norg, David Garby, Sheila Dykstra, Christine TeGrotenhuis, Bill Gerrits, Tim Hartenhof, Katrina Hutten, Jennifer Gerrits, James VanderHeide, Laura VanHatten, Nicky Eye, Arie Bronk, Eddy Visser, Eydie Dykstra, Robert Kloosterhuis, Jack and Evelyn Feenstra, Tony and Jenny DeWeerd, Hilke and Alice Wieringa, Pauline VanBiert, Henry and Connie VanRooyen, John and Marie Verburg, John and Ann Karsten, Gerrit and Elizabeth VanderPloeg, Ray Schraa, George and Betty Zondervan, Herman Groenewegen, Herm and Arlene Penninga, Cecil Haagsma, Roland Buteyn, Jean and Dick deRuiter, Ann deRuiter, Hank deRuiter, Dennis and Tammy Vandermeulen, Roland Buteyn, Gerrit Tervrugt, Ruby and Bill Leistra, Sieger Klooststra, Leni and Bill Simmelink, Norman and Mae Prins, Jack and Esther Fraher, Lena and Dirk Simmelink, Rev. Clarence Bishop, Sandy Siepman, Allan Tiel, Pat and Bob Van Aertselaer, Carl Boonstra, Arie and Jenny Bronk, Jake and Gerda DeJong, Eydie Dykstra, Randy Harris, Dirk and Liz Jongsma, Sas and Rina Kingma, Randy Kunkel, Henk and Eta Meinders, Dennis Nault, Marten Posthumus, John Siepman, Len and Henny Slikker, Sidney Smid, Harvey Vaags, Harry and Martha VanderWees, Len Verbeek, Leo and Carla Visser, Darryl Westervelt, John Zwiars, Jack Buis, Hennie DeRaaf, Martin DeRaaf, Martha Melissen, Melis Melissen, Berendina VanHell, Marv John Norden, Rosemond Smith, Ed Smith, Sieger Klooststra, Ann Kloet, Trish Smith, Ida Kaastra Mutoigo, Doreen Hoogvliets. Thank you to all those we missed: our 32 American volunteers, Winnipeg church members and others who contributed so much!



**Christian Reformed World Relief Committee**  
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